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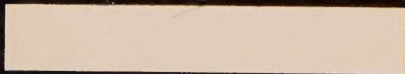
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THE CAUSES OF THE PRESENT CONFLICT OF
IDEALS IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

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THE CAUSES OF
The Present Conflict of Ideals
IN
The Church of England

BY R. D. RICHARDSON, B.A.
B.LITT. (Oxon.)

LONDON
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET, W.
1923

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TO
MY TEACHERS

H. D. L. V., W. J. C., C. W. E., H. D. A. M.

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“By identifying the new learning with heresy, you make orthodoxy synonymous with ignorance.”—ERASMUS.

FOREWORD

THE series of manuals, of which this is the fifth, is intended to place before readers of ordinary education clear and brief statements of various sides of Christian belief and practice, as they appear in the light of modern criticism and research. The writers are all loyal members of the Church of England. Though they cannot avoid controversy, they write not primarily with controversial intent, but rather to give voice to the convictions of a school in the Church which feels that the times require a fresh setting forth of the essential truths of Christianity.

For the Publications Committee of the Churchmen's Union

PERCY GARDNER

Editor.

PREFACE

THE basis of the following attempt to set forth the causes of the present conflict of ideals in the English Church is in the main theological; although leading ideas and principles have been sought rather than a detailed survey of history presented, the historical method has been followed in the main body of the book.

In the present anarchical state of the Church, the problem of the seat of authority in religion is coming to be recognized as among the most important factors in religious conflict, though its fundamental character is generally obscured, and that not infrequently by secondary problems of which it is the foundation. Questions of ethics, the relationship of Church and State, the security of the benefice, and alliances between schools of Churchmen and various political parties all play their part; while a prejudiced ignorance and an unimaginative outlook, especially among the mass of the faithful, retard every effort towards the reunion of English Christendom. These and kindred matters have been but lightly touched upon in an endeavour to accord fuller treatment to theological issues, for ultimately it is in the sphere of theology that the basis of a solution must be found.

The author is fully aware of the limitations of Part I. In a work of this size it is not possible to enter upon an analysis of human consciousness, but it is hoped that its representation as Rational, Moral, and Spiritual, and the use made of this terminology, will be found to

correspond with easily recognisable elements in the experience of all who approach our problem seriously. In Part II, an attempt has been made to bring together the main outlines of the movements of religious thought in England since the Reformation ; and in so far as the story does not point its own moral, Part III offers practical suggestions for the remedy of the existing state of anarchy in the English Church along the only lines upon which history justifies reasonable hope of success. Such value as they may possess lies in the attempt to provide a *via media* on which a sane Modernism can unite with an intelligent Evangelicalism and a reasonable Anglo-Catholicism.

The author does not intend the authority claimed for the human spirit to be such as to dissolve the very idea of Church in a welter of individualism. On the contrary, it is explicitly maintained that the English Church, through its representative bodies and ultimately through the Bishops, has both the right and the duty of defining the limits of individual liberty to which its members, and especially its authorized teachers, shall loyally conform. If this means the acceptance of a National Church, it is urged that although this may not be the ideal of the Body of Christ, yet in the present state of Christendom it is the best ideal for English Churchmen ; for us, and for the time being, it is a choice between a National Church and something infinitely less. And it is surely obvious that no reunion of Christendom which is to include the English Church is even conceivable unless the English Church is at substantial and inner unity in itself.

J. S. B.

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I am greatly indebted to my teacher, the late Rev. C. W. Emmet, who guided my first studies in theology. To Canon R. L. Ottley and Canon E. W. Watson I express my thanks for suggestions which have not been acknowledged in the text, while Professor Percy Gardner has kindly read the proofs. My sincerest thanks are due to the Rev. H. D. A. Major, who read through the whole of the book in MS., bestowing great care and thought on this as on all my work as his pupil. Most of all am I grateful to my friend J. S. Bezzant, whose generosity has been unbounded throughout the whole two years I have spent on this work. He has read the text over and over again, both in MS. and in proof, he has repeatedly helped me to clarify my thought, and finally has increased my great debt to him by writing the Preface and compiling the Index.

R. D. R.

STOURPORT,

Michaelmas, 1923.

CONTENTS

PART I—INTRODUCTORY

CHAPTER I

PAGE

THE NATURE OF RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY	3
---	---

The problem of Authority vital in Religion—The Church and the Bible as external authorities—The authority of the human spirit—Four activities distinguished—Thesis of this Book.

CHAPTER II

THE ORDER OF EVOLUTION OF RELIGIOUS AUTHORITIES	12
---	----

I. *The Preparation for and Foundation of Christianity:—*

(1) The Rational Consciousness—(2) The Moral Consciousness—(3) The Spiritual Consciousness—(4) The Primitive Church—(5) The New Testament.

II. *The Middle Ages:—*

The Rational, Moral, and Spiritual Consciousness of Christians in bondage to the Church.

III. *The Reformation and Afterwards:—*

The protest of the human spirit—Its bondage to the Bible—Gradual emancipation of the Rational, Moral, and Spiritual Consciousness—Freedom and Authority.

PART II—HISTORICAL AND THEOLOGICAL

CHAPTER III

THE REFORMATION SETTLEMENT OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND	29
---	----

I. *Doctrinal Position of the Church of England:—*

The New Testament for doctrine—The primitive Church for practice.

II. *The Position assigned to the Rational and Moral Consciousness.*

III. *The Position assigned to the Spiritual Consciousness.*

IV. *The Comprehensiveness of the Church of England.*

CHAPTER IV

	PAGE
THE APPEARANCE OF THE THREE HISTORIC PARTIES IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND	43

I. *The Puritans and Presbyterians* :—

The authority for doctrine (the New Testament) encroaches on the authority for practice (the primitive Church).

II. *The Laudians* :—

The authority for practice (the primitive Church) encroaches on the authority for doctrine (the New Testament)—A Liberal or English Catholicism.

III. *The First Movement of Rational Thought in the Seventeenth Century* :—

The Falkland School—Its relation to the Laudians and Puritans—Arminianism.

IV. *The Moral Consciousness asserts itself* :—

The Baptists.

The Spiritual Consciousness asserts itself :—

The Quakers.

V. *The Second Movement of Rational Thought in the Seventeenth Century* :—

The philosophy of Catholicism and Protestantism—The Cambridge Platonists.

CHAPTER V

THE MOVEMENTS OF RELIGIOUS THOUGHT IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY	74
---	----

I. *Outstanding Features of the Century* :—

Reaction to the authority of the Rational Consciousness—Rise of industrialism—The new knowledge and the growth of the mechanical view—"Natural religion."

II. *The High Church Party and the Nonjurors* :—

The narrowing down of the principles of English Catholicism.

- III. *The Philosophy of John Locke*
- IV. *Rational Thought outside the Church :—*
 Characteristics of the two schools of Deism—Discussion of principal points involved—The ideas of God and of man—Natural and revealed religion—The place of the Moral and Spiritual Consciousness.
- V. *Rational Thought among Dissenters :—*
 The Unitarians.
- VI. *Rational Thought inside the English Church :—*
 The newer Latitudinarians.
- VII. *Reaction to the Authority of the Emotions :—*
 (a) Outside the Church of England : the Methodists.
 (b) Inside the Church of England : the Evangelicals.
- VIII. *The State of the Religious Parties at the end of the the Century.*

CHAPTER VI

THE FORMATIVE FORCES OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY . 127

- I. *The French Revolution :—*
 Effect on status of clergy—Birth of modern democracy—The Christian Socialists—Collapse of individualism.
- II. *The Romantic Movement :—*
 Literature—Painting—Furniture—Ceramics—Music.
- III. *The Formulation of a New Metaphysic :—*
 German Idealism — Coleridge— Carlylism—Subsequent developments.
- IV. *The Conclusions of Natural Science and Psychology :—*
 Final conquests of the mechanical view—Its shallowness exposed.
- V. *Literary and Historical Criticism of the Bible.*

CHAPTER VII

	PAGE
THE REAPPEARANCE OF THE THREE HISTORIC PARTIES IN THE ENGLISH CHURCH IN THE NINETEENTH CEN- TURY AND THEIR RECONSTRUCTION	159
I. <i>The Evangelicals.</i>	
II. <i>The Anglo-Catholics.</i>	
III. <i>Movements of Rational Thought in the Nineteenth Century :—</i>	
(1) The “Noetics” ; (2) the Sceptical Reaction ; (3) F. D. Maurice and his School ; (4) The Broad Churchmen.	
IV. <i>The Reconstruction of the Historic Parties—Modern- ism v. Traditionalism.</i>	

PART III—CONCLUSION

CHAPTER VIII

SOME PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS OF THE EXISTING SITUATION	215
I. <i>The Reversal in the Order of Priority of Religious Authorities now completed :—</i>	
Christian Experience defined—The foundations of faith— The Church as the spiritual mother of humanity.	
II. <i>The Marks of Catholicity of a True Church :—</i>	
Spiritual dogmas—“Notional religion”—Varieties of religious experience—Disciplinary powers—Church order and ritual.	
III. <i>Dissent and the Church of England :—</i>	
The sectarian spirit outside and inside the Church—Ignor- ance of the true principles of the English Church— Condition of the main religious communions in England to-day—The relation of religious unity to religious authority.	
IV. <i>The New Reformation in the Church of England :—</i>	
Its relation to the old Reformation—The Rational, Moral, and Spiritual Consciousness—The Church—The Bible— External and internal marks of continuity—Conclusion.	
BIBLIOGRAPHY	237
INDEX	245

PART I
INTRODUCTORY

THE CAUSES OF THE PRESENT CONFLICT OF IDEALS IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

CHAPTER I

THE NATURE OF RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY

A TRUE understanding of the past is the surest guide to a knowledge of the present.¹ The present conflict of ideals in the Church of England is no novel or ephemeral phenomenon: it has its roots in history, and the bitterness which attends the conflict is due at least in part to the widespread misunderstanding of that history. There is an evolution in religion,² as in all other activities of life, and a clearer insight into the factors of that evolution is the first essential for scientific and practical handling of the existing situation. Ecclesiastical controversialists are apt to take too favourable a view of their claims to possess

¹ "Both the Church and the world of to-day are what they are as the result of the whole of their antecedents. The history of a party may be written on the theory of periodical occultation; but he who wishes to trace the descent of religious thought, and the practical working of the religious ideals must follow these through all the phases they have actually assumed." Mark Pattison, *Essays and Reviews*, p. 255.

² Contrast p. 219.

4 THE NATURE OF RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY

and defend the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, as against the errors of their opponents ; but history, with its longer and wider views, awards the honours in a more impartial manner. To understand the causes of the present conflict is the first step towards reaching a solution.

Every religion must have its supreme authority, and different views concerning the claims of different authorities are a frequent cause of conflict. The authorities in the Christian religion are the Church, the Bible, and the human spirit in its rational, moral, and spiritual manifestations. Two classes of differences arise. Whereas every school of Christians acknowledges the existence of all these authorities, some require that they shall be held in a certain fixed order, while others so stress the importance of one as to seem actually hostile to another. The following are typical examples :—

William Tyndale regarded the Roman Church of his day as hostile to the authority of the Bible.

Archbishop Laud regarded Puritanism as hostile to the authority of the Church.

Bishop Butler regarded the Methodists as yielding an authority to the emotions which was hostile to that of reason.

Richard Hooker held that the authority of the Bible was prior to that of reason, and that the authority of reason was prior to that of the Church.

The Cambridge Platonists held that the authority of reason was prior to that of either the Bible or the Church.

Some Anglo-Catholics to-day hold that the authority

of the Church is prior to that of the Bible, and that the authority of the Bible is prior to that of reason.

A brief examination of these types of religious authority will indicate what each involves.

(1) The Church and the Bible, regarded as infallible authorities, belong predominantly to the sphere of the seen; they are regarded as clear, historical, self-revelations of God. They require only to be accepted by faith, and this first initial act of surrender to their authority is all that is required of the individual. In the one case, the Church's system, to which the believer must yield unfeigned obedience, accomplishes all that is needed for his eternal salvation: in the other case his faith in the statements made in the Sacred Book justifies him before God. In both cases, reason, aided by spiritual illumination, performs the subordinate function of recognising the supreme authority of Church and Bible respectively.¹ While however such surrender and the steps which lead up to it are not to be condemned off-hand as sins against reason, the latter is deliberately relegated to a subordinate position after the surrender to the external authority. This happens the more easily where there is lack of education and imagination. Where vision and outlook are limited, as in the crudely literal popular mind, there will be found a marked tendency to cling blindly to one type of authority to the exclusion of all others. Moreover, since the Church and the Bible are concrete facts, plain for all to see, they are the authorities likely to capture the allegiance of

¹ Mark Pattison, *Essays and Reviews*, p. 328.

6 THE NATURE OF RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY

the bulk of mankind, which shrinks from the splendid isolation of the prophet and is ever prone to seek for finality and infallible supports. Inevitably, therefore, unthinking devotion to Church and Bible has been the rude strength of the two great Christian schools, Catholic and Protestant.¹

(2) The authority of the human spirit is of quite a different order. It is much wider in its scope and may and does obtain in spheres where the authority of the Church and of the Bible are unknown. Even when brought into subjection to either of these, it still retains its distinctive characteristics and tendencies. Indeed it must be remembered that the inspired human spirit was the *fons et origo* of both Church and Bible, a fact which renders beside the point the favourite catholic argument that the Church was prior to the Bible.²

In order to avoid confusion throughout the whole of this book it must be stated as clearly as possible what is meant by the human spirit. The human spirit or personality is an *union* of different senses

¹ Cf. J. Tulloch, *Rational Theology in the Seventeenth Century*, vol. i, p. ix.

² See p. 63. And cf. A. Sabatier, *The Religions of Authority and the Religion of the Spirit*, p. 364. "Neither the Bible nor the Church is a principle or a first cause : history shows that on the contrary they are consequences and effects. The Bible is at once the work of the Church and the fruit of the preaching of the Gospel. It follows that, far from being that which authenticates and guarantees the truth of the Gospels, it is from the Gospel that both Bible and Church draw their original existence and present dignity." Cf. also Jacob Boëhme : "If I had no other book except the book which I myself am I should have books enough. The entire Bible lies in me if I have Christ's Spirit in me."

or faculties—intellect, will, feeling—a rational sense, a moral sense, an emotional sense. Together, these may be regarded as constituting “the logic of the whole personality.” “The tendency to separate and half-personify” them is a mischievous one,¹ and it will be found that this tendency has been a fruitful source of misunderstanding and conflict in the English Church since the Reformation.

The word reason, when properly understood, is the one which perhaps best defines the trinity in unity of human personality. “The human mind,” said Macarius, “is the throne of the Godhead”; nothing which transcends reason may be understood, or even known, by man.² But reason in this wide sense is not to be confused with the merely critical or logical understanding. Coleridge, for example, following a distinction first made by Kant,³ made a similar distinction between reason and understanding which he also brought out by contrasting the words reason and rationalism. “Rationalism only tries the modes and laws of spiritual experience by the mere understanding.” This somewhat arbitrary narrowing down of the scope of the word rationalism has become popular, and will be adopted as far as possible in this book with reference to the narrow type of mind which believes only after sifting and weighing one set of evidences for belief, perpetuating the gap between faith and knowledge. Such will be said to exalt the

¹ W. R. Inge, *Bampton Lectures on Christian Mysticism*, pp. 19-21.

² See p. 175.

³ See pp. 138 f.

8 THE NATURE OF RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY

Rational Consciousness to the supreme place of authority.

Besides a rational sense man possesses a moral sense. Therefore the artificial and misleading division of human personality which often obtains will make it advisable to speak of the Moral Consciousness as a separate religious authority, whereas no real antithesis is possible between the Rational Consciousness and the Moral Consciousness. In point of fact it is usually the revolt of the Moral Consciousness which involves the Rational Consciousness in critical investigation of the whole subject of authority in religion.¹ Our moral judgments claim to be right for all moral beings, and if this claim be admitted these judgments "must come from the intellectual part of our nature whether we call it reason, or moral reason,"² or the Rational and Moral Consciousness. To admit this is in no wise to attribute infallibility to the Moral Consciousness. The universal reason, "in striving to convert the human organism into an organ of itself,"³ can only succeed in proportion first to the response and then to the natural gifts of individuals.

If the Rational Consciousness is linked with the Moral Consciousness to form a higher unity, the highest synthesis of human personality takes place in the Spiritual Consciousness.⁴ The Rational, Moral, and

¹ See p. 18.

² H. Rashdall, *Conscience and Christ*, pp. 8 f. See also *Is Conscience an Emotion?* by the same author.

³ Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, p. 33.

⁴ The awakening of the Spiritual Consciousness, which only takes place in the mystic of other religions, should be the normal accompaniment of all Christian life, which is

Spiritual Consciousness is an expression which well describes the triune nature of the reasonable soul of man, the inspired human reason or personality seen as it were through a spectroscope. There can be no intelligent contact with the spiritual world except through the agency of the Rational Consciousness, though in that very contact the Rational Consciousness is raised to a sphere above rationalism. "Sir," wrote Whichcote to Tuckney, "I oppose not rational to spiritual, for spiritual is most rational."¹ When definite contradiction is admitted between them there has been failure to recognise their true scope and nature.

This failure to understand the relation of the "heart" to the "head" is however common. It deserves close attention, for the spiritual or mystical experience "claims for itself an unfaltering credence and an absolute authority" which are seldom successfully challenged, by reason of their value for life.² But there exist two variations of the authority of the Spiritual Consciousness—one which gathers up the whole personality into a higher organic unity, and another which can only be called irrational since it perpetuates a false division in human personality. This latter type is best defined as the authority of the emotions, or feelings.

lifted to a higher plane in the scale of evolution by the new revelation of God in Jesus Christ. See pp. 13 ff.

¹ It is interesting to note that the Sadhu Sundar Singh draws attention to the increased mental activity which accompanies Christian ecstasy. See Streeter and Appasamy, *The Sadhu*, p. 136.

² J. B. Pratt, *The Religious Consciousness*, pp. 476 f.

10 THE NATURE OF RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY

Thus, although the human spirit is one, it is found in practice that as it slowly comes to fuller self-consciousness final authority is demanded variously for the Emotions, for the Rational Consciousness, for the Moral Consciousness, and for the Spiritual Consciousness. It will therefore be necessary in the course of this book to refer to six different types of religious authority, two of which are external and four internal. Properly speaking, four only may be distinguished—the Church, the Bible, the human spirit resting in itself, and as it is when raised to its highest power in conscious contact with God.¹

It is intended to show that the conflict of ideals in the Church of England to-day is the consequence of the emergence, the evolution, and the growing recognition of the claims of the human spirit which forbids men to give unquestioning obedience to the *dicta* of Church and Bible. This will be the more clearly understood if it be indicated briefly where each of the four religious authorities logically must lead if stressed to the exclusion of the others.

1. *The Church*, if made the final authority from which there can be no appeal, must inevitably develop into an ecclesiastical autocracy, claiming not only

¹ Cf. Pascal, *Pensées*, Translation in *The Scott Library*, ccxxxviii. Wm. James, speaking of mystical states of consciousness, says: "They break down the authority of the non-mystical or rationalistic consciousness, based upon the understanding and the senses alone. They show it to be only one kind of consciousness. They open out the possibility of other kinds of truth, in which, so far as anything in us vitally responds to them, we may freely continue to have faith." *Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 423.

moral and spiritual but even intellectual infallibility—the Church of Rome.

2. *The Bible*, used uncritically as an authority independent of the Church, can only produce a number of fissiparous Protestant sects, each based upon a conflicting interpretation of the Sacred Book, as is clearly shown in the religious history of English-speaking Christianity since the Reformation.

3. *Rationalism*, regarded as an authority which speculates about the world and human life, analysing and evaluating the Church, the Bible, and mystical experience, though ascribing no final authority to any of them, leads to pure ethical theism with an Erastian bias in church government, which retains its mind and voice, but is ready to part with its body or share the body of the state. The typical example of an overstressing of rationalism which leads to a position outside the Church is Unitarianism.

4. *Mysticism* accords infallibility to “the inner light,” and if made the sole authority in religion must lead to an extreme individualism, which like Quakerism stands outside organised Christianity altogether.

CHAPTER II

THE EVOLUTION OF THE AUTHORITIES OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION

THE order of evolution of the authorities in the Christian religion must now briefly be indicated.

I

THE PREPARATION FOR AND THE FOUNDATION OF CHRISTIANITY

(1) Undoubtedly the Rational Consciousness governs life as a whole. In primitive religions, where man is dominated by animistic beliefs, it is a natural instinct for self-preservation which prompts him to worship and propitiate powers which seem to him to inhabit various natural objects, *e.g.* trees, rivers, rocks, etc.

(2) In the fulfilment of social life the same instinct of self-interest present in each individual member of the tribe leads to a better development of ideas of justice. Sooner or later the ethical prophet, impelled by his clearer consciousness of "the motions of the universal Reason,"¹ arises to proclaim the inflexible righteousness of the paramount tribal deity. Those who hear the message tremble but do not dispute, having previously been only less explicit in their

¹ Inge, *Bampton Lectures*, p. 33.

conviction of its truth than the herald himself. The first awakening of individual religion may be dated from these stirrings of the Moral Consciousness.¹ Men now begin to feel the pangs of remorse for their moral misdemeanours, and in the later stages of such a religion, when the holiness of God has also been proclaimed in addition to His attributes of power and righteousness, a searching scrupulosity saps the joys of life in futile effort after merit. In the end, religions of this type become formal and their existence is only prolonged by their less worthy representatives, for those possessed of greater powers of reasoning or mystical feeling not infrequently lapse into "a mocking atheism" or adopt a speculative pantheism at the first breath of rational criticism.²

(3) "In Jesus of Nazareth appeared a third form of the human Religious Consciousness, the supreme form everywhere announced and prepared for by the spirit of reformers and prophets as well as by the complaints of pious souls, and which since Jesus has become a living Christian Consciousness in the bosom of humanity."² It is therefore legitimate from the evolutionary point of view to consider Jesus Christ, the Supreme Revealer of God, as a new moral and spiritual factor in the human race.³ He is the first of

¹ Cf. Rashdall, (*Bampton Lectures*, Appendix I. p. 468), who says that if any one rejects the authority of the Moral Consciousness he rejects the only basis on which the Christian conception of God can be defended.

² A. Sabatier, *The Religions of Authority and the Religion of the Spirit*, pp. 372 ff.

³ See E. Underhill, *The Mystic Way*, pp. 35, 43, where it is argued that Jesus Christ is a new *biological* factor in the human species. See above, p. 84.

14 THE EVOLUTION OF THE AUTHORITIES

a new race, lifting men in His own Person to new levels, and giving abundantly, and in the most actual and concrete sense, new life as a result of His uplifting and unsurpassable revelation of the nature of God as Love. Further, the ideal which He proclaimed, Jesus Himself realised, and it is this triumphant achievement which really constitutes the claim of Christianity to be the Absolute Religion. The progressive realisation of the perfection of Christ is the natural path of Christian evolution ; man's knowledge of God is dependent upon the richness and fullness of the experience of Christ in thought and life.

These then are the " profound stratifications of the Christian Consciousness." With the acceptance of Christ by faith, the former " dualism between human morality and the higher angelic life " disappears. " The performance of natural duties, the regular exercise of all human faculties, the progress of culture as of righteousness, these make the perfection of the Christian life. When the Christian religion becomes an inward reality, a fact of consciousness, it is nothing other than consciousness raised to its highest power." ¹

(4) Although the growing life of the Christian is found in the knowledge of and in communion with a Person, yet, inasmuch as the Christian is a member of a human society and is surrounded by human institutions, it is not surprising to find in the record of history that Christian faith and love " entwine themselves round almost any institutional structure, and in many cases can hardly stand without some support of this

¹ Sabatier, *op. cit.*, p. 282.

kind.”¹ The creation of an institution, the Church, was the first result of that spiritual movement known as Christianity; the second was the creation of a Sacred Book.² The Primitive Church was a society permeated by the spirit of love;³ the New Testament was the record of the life and teaching of the historical Christ and of the experiences of His followers.

Unfortunately, however, men did not properly understand the principles of freedom which had been bequeathed to them by Christ, and when the first fervour of Christians had subsided, the spirit of the natural man, still overpowered by the accumulated weight of centuries of customary submission to external authorities, obscured that of the Master; the authority of an ecclesiastical tradition consequently prevailed to the exclusion (at first) of the authority of the Sacred Book, whereas it is plain that the influence of prophets and teachers “is dependent upon the actual knowledge of their words, their lives, their characters.”⁴

¹ W. R. Inge, “Did Christ Found the Church?” Article in *The Modern Churchman*, September-October, 1917, p. 277.

² Exactly the same thing is to be seen in the promulgation of a Law Book, *Deuteronomy*, by those impregnated with the spirit of the eighth-century prophets (Amos, Hosea, Micah, Isaiah), who banded themselves together to maintain the purity of Yahwism during the reign of the idolatrous Manasseh.

³ Cf. Harnack, *Expansion of Christianity*, chap. iii, (“The Gospel of Love and Charity”). The testimony of pagans quoted by Tertullian, (*Apolog.*, xxxix) shows the characteristic spirit of the whole early Church. “‘Only look,’ they say, ‘look how they love one another. Look how they are prepared to die for one another.’”

⁴ H. Rashdall, *Conscience and Christ*, p. 21. Cf. also A. Sabatier: “The destiny of holiness on earth is irrevocably linked with the destiny of the Bible.” *The Religions of Authority and the Religion of the Spirit*, p. xxxv.

16 THE EVOLUTION OF THE AUTHORITIES

Thus, the authority of the Spirit of Christ was overlaid by the authority of the Church, and the authority of the Christian Consciousness subordinated to that of the usurper. The subsequent history of Christianity is that of the gradual awakening of Christians to Christ's "perfect law of liberty."

II

THE MIDDLE AGES

Nevertheless, even during the dark ages, and in fact whenever Christians profess to subordinate themselves to the authority of the Church or of the Bible, reason is still king in a very true sense even though it may choose to abdicate its throne. There is no escape from the passing of private judgments by every sane human being. Even the profession of simple faith and piety is essentially a rational process, for its very possibility is dependent upon the intellectualism of the past. The very designation of an experience as "religious" involves the use of reason.¹ Reason, it will be seen, is not necessarily dialectical—the higher self does other kinds of thinking²—and reason often approves and interprets by reference to certain ideals of life and conduct even when the agent is not conscious that he has made use of such processes. For example, the practical reason controlled the life of St. Francis by his consciousness that the love of

¹ Dr. L. P. Jacks, in lectures on *The Problem of Evil*, at Manchester College, Oxford, in the Trinity Term, 1922.

² Cf. St. Ambrose: "Non in dialectica complacuit Deo salvu m facere populum suum"—"It hath not pleased God to save His people by argument."

mankind and of the ideal Man Jesus Christ is a higher motive than self-love.¹ By such a standard as this, his every thought, word, and deed were scrutinised with all the passionate self-accusation of a saint.

The mass of Christians shrink from the effort this involves, and are content to choose for their moral and spiritual guidance the external religious authority of which they most approve. This may be itself a rational process, at least in its method, but when submission to the selected authority becomes customary and unthinking, as when it is accepted entirely as an inheritance, it becomes irrational and demoralising. The external authority comes to have a vested interest in the maintenance of its own supremacy, and for this reason sooner or later begins to overrule rational and moral sanctions. Inevitably there follows a reaction and the internal authority written in the very constitution of man's nature once more claims its primal rights. Thus, one incident of the Reformation was the outrage of the Moral Consciousness of Europe by Tetzels Sale of Indulgences, which encouraged men to sin with impunity.

Other examples in subsequent times are the following :—

The Rational Consciousness of Pascal, bound

¹ Hastings Rashdall, *Is Conscience an Emotion?* pp. 117, 177. Cf. also Pascal, *Pensées* (ed. cit.), No. LXX.: "All bodies, the firmament, the stars, the earth and its kingdoms, are not worth the smallest mind, for a mind knows them, and itself, and bodies know nothing. All bodies together, and minds together, and all the productions of both, are not worth the least act of love, for love is of an order infinitely higher."

18 THE EVOLUTION OF THE AUTHORITIES

inextricably by the chains of Augustinian theology, sought despairingly but unavailingly in the reason for grounds of belief in God. In consequence he became a philosophical, if not a religious, sceptic.¹

The Moral Consciousness of many in the nineteenth century revolted against the crude blood-theology of the Evangelicals in respect of the Atonement made by Christ.

Belief in everlasting punishment and hell fire has been largely abandoned to-day because the Moral Consciousness finds it in opposition to the belief that the nature of God is Love, and the Rational Consciousness finds that the laws of natural science are violated by such a conception.

The idea illustrated by these four examples has been dramatised by Longfellow in *The Golden Legend*. In this poem, the casuistry of the Church of the Middle Ages is exposed in its naked perverseness, and in the futility of its radically immoral sanctions either to still the voice of conscience or suspend the inexorable Laws of Consequence, whereby

“The wrongs of ages are redressed.

And the justice of God made manifest.”²

It will thus be seen that there is a thrust and drag of rational and moral life. The Moral Consciousness frequently makes the first protest and this sets the Rational Consciousness to work.³ In the consequent reaction the external authority may even be deposed. To vilify reason is therefore simply to court present

¹ Cf. *Pensées*, No. III and many others.

² Towards the end of Act II.

³ See above, p. 8, where the relation of the Moral Consciousness to the Rational Consciousness is discussed.

disaster and to prepare the way for future revolution. It is this fact which renders necessary the recognition of reason as one of the authorities in religion. "As the instrument of phenomenal knowledge, it is not the source or religion, or its destroyer, but the critic of its representations and modes of conception. In this it performs a friendly office, indispensable to the balance of human progress. To expect from free inquiry any fruits of piety, and to dread from it any triumph of impiety, are alike absurd."¹ This recognition of reason assigns to it as its function not to produce conviction but to explain the cause of it. In other words it does not *normally* desire to substitute itself for the other religious authorities, but only to demonstrate their rationality,² though a conscious preference for an intellectual satisfaction with regard to the claims of other authorities does show "the influence of a certain ideal as to the relative importance of different parts of our nature."³ Accordingly the claims of the Rational and Moral Consciousness become more pressing as the rights of personality assert themselves. It is therefore not surprising to find that the finality of the judgments of reason and conscience are obscurely apprehended and insufficiently stressed by the majority of religious teachers, for the moral reason only becomes luminous with increasing self-consciousness. It is a more variable factor in human personality precisely because it comes so high up in the scale of evolution.

¹ Dr. Martineau, Introduction to J. J. Tayler's *Religious Life of England*.

² Cf. H. Rashdall, *Is Conscience an Emotion?* p. 115.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 185.

20 THE EVOLUTION OF THE AUTHORITIES

Closely parallel to the development of the Rational and Moral Consciousness has been that of the Spiritual Consciousness. The religious experience of the Christian has indeed always asserted its authority, but it has been robbed of its full rights by the advantage which man's sense of sin has given to the two external authorities. For many centuries—even to-day in most quarters—the validity of Christian experience was rigidly confined to the assurance of the individual and excluded from every estimate of the world-process. This was more easily achieved than the suppression of the demands of reason, since the fullest realisation of the presence of God in nature and in the human soul is an even more variable factor in human personality than recognition of the claims of reason in religion, and is accompanied by such a liberation of self-consciousness and freedom as to mark it out as the latest stage in the evolutionary process. "The whole meaning of creation," as Professor Pringle Pattison finely says, "is . . . the origination of conscious spirits." ¹

The assertions of spiritual independence made by Christian mystics have often given occasion of fear to the ruling representatives of the authority of Church or Bible, and careful management on the part of the latter has been necessary to secure their submission.²

¹ We now see how it is that the Rational Consciousness and the Spiritual Consciousness cannot be divorced from each other if the rational is to be truly rational, and the spiritual truly spiritual and not merely emotional. See also pp. 7 ff.

² *E.g.* St. Francis of Assisi, St. John of the Cross, St. Teresa. Cf. also the case of Meister Eckhart, while even

The uncompromising claims made by the fourteenth-century mystics for the authority of their contact with reality provide a large part of the background for the Reformation. Christian mystics, by the very nature of things, experience more intensely than others a direct contact with the spiritual world, and through them successively humanity is raised permanently a step nearer to its goal by their perception of its nature, duty, and destiny.

III

THE REFORMATION AND AFTERWARDS

In the great protest against the authority of the Church which was made by the human spirit at the Reformation, the rights of personality were only grasped by a small group of spiritual reformers. The blow for freedom was aimed in the dark. At the bidding of the outraged Christian Consciousness of the individual, when as has been said "Greece rose from the dead with the New Testament in her hand," that Book replaced the authority of the Church for the vast bulk of her members in the north of Europe; they considered that the Church, having become corrupt, had forfeited the fief which she claimed over the souls of men.¹

Henry Suso was reprimanded by his order for writing heretical books. The submission of Protestant mystics has been more difficult to secure. Boëhme for example was only silenced for a few years, and his spiritual religion was regarded as irreconcilable with Lutheranism by its accredited pastors.

¹ The metaphor is taken from Wycliff's theory of the Dominion of Grace which he derived from FitzRalph, Archbishop of Armagh. The human spirit, while protesting

22 THE EVOLUTION OF THE AUTHORITIES

The appeal to the Bible as the supreme and infallible authority soon degenerated into the Bibliolatry of Protestantism. A new external authority simply displaced the old one. Protestantism lacked all sense of development, and so assigned to the words of Moses an authority equal to that which it assigned to the words of Christ. It is not surprising therefore, considering the undeveloped and unscientific character of literary and historical criticism in the early sixteenth century, that the words of Christ should not have been distinguished from those of His biographers, whose narrower outlook and spirit had perforce crept into the Scriptural records.¹

Thus the Reformation, which seemed at its outset when in close alliance with the new learning to promise an immense liberation of the spirit of man, was disappointingly diverted into a policy which fortified itself in the rejection of the authority of the Church by subjecting itself to the verbal authority of Scripture. The human spirit having struck the first blow for freedom was not strong enough to achieve complete emancipation. The northern Humanists were distrustful of sixteenth-century Protestantism, for they saw where that crude and rude movement must lead under the impulse of an undisciplined populace and

against the corruption of Church and Papacy, was quite unable to conceive of religious authority except in terms of the Feudal System.

¹ There is but one alternative to this admission, and that an incredible one, namely, that "at certain times Christ fell below the level of His own teaching," e.g. contrast St. Matt. xviii. 21 f. with St. Matt. xviii. 35 (see L. Dougall and C. W. Emmet, *The Lord of Thought*, pp. 253 and *passim*).

at the mercy of unscrupulous rulers. Their insight was too fine, their grasp of the principle of continuity between the old and modern worlds too delicately adjusted, to be understood by the coarser minds which clamoured for revolution. For example, the Oxford humanists Colet, More, and Erasmus,¹ with their patron Archbishop Warham, constituted but one small element in the life of the English Church and Nation at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Protestantism was indeed a production of the Renaissance,² but the northern humanists were its religious first-fruits and its finest flower.

The Reformation would have gained inestimably in value as a religious movement if only some co-ordination of the ideals of Luther and Erasmus could have been achieved. As it was, the ideals of both suffered shipwreck on the rock of Calvin's Protestant scholasticism to which the human spirit was compelled to cling for a very long time. The Rational, Moral, and Spiritual Consciousness of the Christian complacently endured its tutelage to Biblical authority while it was threatened by a reassertion of the tyranny of the Papacy : " the Bible and the Bible only was the

¹ A change began to come over Humanism as it crossed the Alps and came into contact with a race which was at once less light-hearted, more deeply loyal and more constitutionally religious. It lost a good deal of its colour and joyousness and much of its æsthetic ardour, especially in Germany. In England some of the balance was restored, and the three sides of its character are well brought out in the three men who have been mentioned. Its intellectual avidity is represented by Erasmus ; its moral and spiritual idealism exemplified in Colet ; its æsthetic charm reflected by More.

² Cf. H. Rashdall, *Conscience and Christ*, p. 216.

24 THE EVOLUTION OF THE AUTHORITIES

religion of Protestants" so long as it provided an armoury from which they might draw their chief weapons in the conflict with Rome. When the fear of Rome began to subside, the intense reverence for the authority of Scripture began to grow weaker.¹ Thenceforward the growing Rational, Moral, and Spiritual Consciousness was increasingly unable to accept the situation comfortably, for causes which may be summarised as follows from the brilliant picture of the history of rationalism drawn by Lecky.²

(1) The decline of the sense of the miraculous involved by the new conception of Natural Law.

(2) Following this, the growth of new ideas of God, man, and the universe, and a consequent new moral movement resulting in the decay of belief in witchcraft, religious persecution and ghastly notions concerning future punishment.

(3) The abolition of a belief in the guilt of error and in an asceticism which had paralysed the intellectual and material progress of mankind.

(4) The operation of the rational spirit which gradually secularised every department of political life and formed habits of thought which affected all judgments.

(5) The rise of the industrial and democratic spirit in Europe, resulting in moral and intellectual changes which gave rise to the science of political

¹ "Many times men walk according to conscience when they are walking quite contrary to Scripture," said Archbishop Leighton, enunciating a principle the significance of which he did not understand.

² *The Rise and Influence of Rationalism in Europe*, vol. i, Introduction; vol. ii, p. 408.

economy, and inevitably caused collision with the Church.

This brief survey of the order of evolution of the authorities in the Christian religion has made it clear that since the Reformation considerable *data* have accumulated the investigation of which may help us to determine what should be the exact relations to each other of the authority of the Church, the authority of the Bible, and the authority of the Rational, Moral, and Spiritual Consciousness—in other words, the relation of authority to freedom.¹ It will now suffice to indicate that the conclusion towards which the process of religious evolution has tended is that neither the Church nor the Bible should be deposed as a real and living authority, but that each should be made rational, moral, and spiritual, that is to say, their *original* nature as the expression of the Moral and Spiritual Consciousness of the past should be recognised. When this is done their authority becomes of a different kind; they are regarded no longer as static and infallible, but as directive, progressive, social, and educational.

In the second part of this book it is proposed to examine this process historically within the limits of the Church of England.

¹ This is the great problem which the Church of England has yet to solve. See Ch. VIII.

PART II

HISTORICAL AND THEOLOGICAL

CHAPTER III

THE REFORMATION SETTLEMENT OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

WHAT is the doctrinal position of the Church of England? What are the authorities on which it rests? What is the number of these authorities? and what is the measure of its comprehensiveness?

I

THE DOCTRINAL POSITION OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

There is a tendency among some English Churchmen of the Anglo-Catholic School to say that the Church of England has no distinctive doctrinal position. It is a branch of the Catholic Church, and in their view its doctrine and the authority for that doctrine are those of the Catholic Church. Newman's Tract XC is the best-known exposition of this view but it underlies all the doctrinal teaching of the Anglo-Catholic school.¹ Yet it is evident in view of the secessions to the Roman communion that this claim for the doctrine of the Anglican communion fails to satisfy the actual situation in that Church. Nevertheless it is of importance to note that the XXXIX Articles are patient of a Catholic interpretation. In point of fact they were Articles of Peace, designed

¹ See p. 178.

to include even Romanists! But Newman, as also Keble and Pusey,¹ in their defences of Tract XC, entirely overlooked many points, such as the significance of Article XXI which states that General Councils have erred, and of Article II which gives effect to this decision by eliminating the term *Theotokos*, thus introducing a change of emphasis in the central doctrine of the Incarnation.² To ignore all this is to ignore fact. "If it be said that only the Universal Church, united in all its branches, can speak with authority in defining Christian doctrine, the answer is that the Church of England has spoken for herself, and without consultation with the rest of Christendom, nay, even in opposition to it. The fact remains, however it may fare with the theory."³ What Leontius of Byzantium did for the Eastern Church in the sixth century when he gave the decrees of Chalcedon a sense which reversed their original purport and then accommodated himself to their statements, Newman attempted to do for the Church of England when he attuned his harmonisation to the sectarian Tridentine Decrees. On the other hand, when the Eastern Church promulgated its *Orthodox Confession* in 1643 without consulting other branches of the Church Universal, it displayed a general conception of catholicity similar to that of the English Church when it set

¹ A new edition of Tract XC, with a historical preface by Dr. Pusey, was issued in 1861. Keble's defence is embodied in a letter to Mr. Justice Coleridge, previously printed in 1841, and afterwards published along with a new edition of the Tract.

² A. V. G. Allen, *Freedom in the Church*, p. 167.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 168.

forth the XXXIX Articles on its own authority. It is then possible to defend historically a catholic interpretation of the Articles and at the same time to believe that the Church of England has its own doctrinal position.

It must however be added that the Articles are likewise patient of a Protestant interpretation, annoying as this may be to those who dislike compromise. But when Beard says that nothing "can be doctrinally or historically plainer than that the theology of the XXXIX Articles is the theology of the Confession of Augsburg,"¹ it is not possible to agree with him. That they are not Calvinistic in intention can be seen from the Church Catechism—"I learn to believe in God the Son, who hath redeemed me and *all mankind*"—in the light of which Article XVII should be read. The Articles then are not Calvinistic, but in so far as they make the Bible and not the Church the ultimate authority they are Protestant.² The implied contradiction that the Articles are both Catholic and Protestant is not so intolerable as it may at first seem. The solution is that so far two only of the basic authorities of the Church of England have been worked out—the Bible and the Church.

Further consideration must be given to the exact place which each of these occupies before examining

¹ *The Reformation*, p. 327. It must be confessed, however, that it was only by Providence that the Church of England was saved from committing itself irrevocably to Calvinism. It did not definitely begin to reject it till after the Synod of Dort, and it was able to do so then because neither Cranmer nor Hooker had been Calvinists.

² See Articles VI, VIII, XVII, XXII.

the other authorities in the constitution of the Church of England. It has been well said that the key to the Reformers' actual intentions is contained in their alteration of the traditional interpretation of the three following passages of Holy Scripture :—

Tu es Petrus (cf. Article XIX).

Hoc est corpus meum (cf. Article XXVIII).

Ave Maria plena gratia (cf. Article XXII).

From the first of these they eliminated the authorisation of the Papal system, from the second the doctrine of Transubstantiation, from the third the worship of Mary and the Invocation of Saints. They saw that there was really no support, at least in Scripture, for the organising opportunism of the Papacy, the pseudo-scientific speculations of Aristotelianism, and for the current concessions to superstition. The rejection of these means that the Reformers went back to the New Testament for their doctrine and not to the tradition of the Church; that is, they effected a complete reversal in the position of their ultimate authority. Whatever may be the proportions in which the two were held, the Bible was made the supreme authority for the Church of England at the Reformation. This satisfied the Puritans.

But if the Church of England went back to the New Testament for its doctrine it went back to the primitive Church for its practice. It was ruled¹ that "the Church hath power to decree Rites or Ceremonies," owing to the insufficiency, by silence, of Holy Scripture on questions of organisation and liturgical practice, and because all established order

¹ Article XX.

is divine, having its basis in the very bosom of God.¹ Here of course the Church parted in principle from the Puritans, who were persuaded that it had no right to authorise anything which was "neither commanded nor prohibited by any Prophet, any Evangelist, any Apostle."¹

The link which preserved the principle of continuity between the old and new régimes was forged in the following ways :—

(a) The three orders of Bishops, Priests and Deacons were retained as part of the Church's organisation and regarded as established since the time of the Apostles.² The historic episcopate was not yet regarded as a mark of Catholicity but as a sign of continuity,³ and its authority was retained, by the sapience of Queen Elizabeth and the Tudor statesmen, that the enemy might have no occasion to blaspheme.

(b) The ministry of Sacraments as well as that of the Word was preserved.

(c) The mind of antiquity was consulted assiduously and revered deeply.

(d) The missal and the breviary were the main sources used for the prayers of the Book of Common Prayer.

(e) The English liturgy was set forth as the sign of the English *via media*.⁴

¹ See Hooker, *Ecclesiastical Polity*, Book V, sections viii (2) and (3), and ix (1).

² See Preface to *The Ordinal* in the Book of Common Prayer.

³ Cf. pp. 47 f.

⁴ Note James I's appreciation of this in his remark on

This appeal to primitive practice, and the due reverence to tradition which it entailed, satisfied those Catholics who were not prepared to secede to Rome.

It will thus be seen that the distinctive position of the Church of England was reached by going back to the New Testament for its doctrine and to the primitive Church for its practice: this is the secret of Anglican comprehensiveness. The Erastian hypothesis¹ that the English Reformers were trying to "wed two irreconcilables, Rome and Geneva," and that "it suited the policy of Tudor Statesmen to pronounce these two as one" is really a travesty of the English *via media*. *The Church of England is comprehensive because the English Reformers gave it the widest basis any Church has ever had.* In doctrine it was committed irrevocably to the thought of no one New Testament writer: the whole range of Christian thought, from Jewish apocalyptic to Pauline and Johannine mysticism, was opened out before it. By the side of this, the doctrinal system of Rome is narrowly sectarian. "In the matter of ecclesiastical organisation and liturgical practice the English Reformers aimed at continuity as assisting reverence and order, but were resolved at the same time to the order of Holy Communion as "An evil said mass, in English, without the liftings."

¹ Cf. A. Fawkes, *The Genius of the English Church*, for an exposition of this view. It was also advocated by Macaulay, who says: "In many respects it was well for the Church of England that in an age of exuberant zeal her principal founders were mere politicians. To this circumstance she owes her moderate articles, her decent ceremonies, and noble and pathetic liturgy."

abolish all grossly superstitious and unprofitable practices." ¹ Thus they gained all the advantages of puritan worship without its disadvantages. Clearly then if the policy of the English Reformers was to secure a combination of ancient Catholic practice with reformed ideals, the English *via media* is not the result of a forced compromise but of an union; an union in which the authority of the Bible and the authority of the Church are both recognised and neither is regarded as excluding the other.

Our investigations ² have led us to see that such a reconciliation of these *external* authorities can only take place when each is in harmony with the authority of the Rational and Moral Consciousness and the authority of the Spiritual Consciousness. Therefore, only in so far as these *internal* authorities were recognised in the Reformation Settlement of the Church of England, were the Reformers successful in achieving that ideal and permanent union of religious authorities which has its roots in history and its spreading branches in the reasonable soul of man.

II

THE POSITION ASSIGNED TO THE RATIONAL AND MORAL CONSCIOUSNESS

Whilst the traditional elements in the life of the Church of England were preserved by insistence on the authority of Holy Scripture and primitive practice,

1. J. R. Cohu, *The Evolution of the Christian Ministry*, p. 124, n.

² See pp. 25, 31.

yet scope was left for the activity of the Rational and Moral Consciousness in these two spheres. The very testing and reformulation of Church Doctrine was in itself essentially a rational and moral process, involving the criticism of the definitions of General Councils, the rejection of the mediæval theory of the Mass, the setting forth of a specifically English doctrine of the Eucharist, the revision of Calvinistic theology, and the complete reversal in priority of the two universally recognised Christian authorities.

In the sphere of Church practice, the activity of this rational spirit is no less evident. It is plainly at work in the organisation of Church practice itself as is seen in the words of the "judicious Hooker": "That which the Church by her ecclesiastical authority shall probably think and define to be true or good, must *in congruity of reason*, overrule all other inferior judgments whatsoever." ¹

But it is in the Ordinal that are found the plainest indications of the freedom allowed to the rational spirit. In this the clergy are enjoined to study diligently and are conceded the right to interpret Scripture in accordance with their own convictions,² "nor is any provision made for the exigency of their conscience leading them in opposition to what may be at any time the prevailing interpretation of the Church's standard," ³ except within certain limits defined by the Articles, the fixing of which involves

¹ *Ecclesiastical Polity*, Book V, section viii, (2). (Italics mine.)

² Ordinal, *Ordering of Priests and Consecration of Bishops*.

³ A. V. G. Allen, *The Continuity of Christian Thought*, p. 324.

an increasing use of the rational spirit with the advance of knowledge.

For example, in Article VI it is said that "Holy Scripture *containeth* all things necessary to Salvation" ¹ and that nothing else must be taught as necessary to Salvation. The infallibility of the Bible however is not asserted and if it was assumed at the time, no effort was made to guard it either by any theory of inspiration or by any dogma as to the mode of composition of the various books, their date, or authorship. The way was thus left open for the acceptance of the results of literary and historical criticism. Again, in Article XX it is said that the interpreter of Scripture must not "so expound one place of Scripture that it be repugnant to another." ² This in the long run involves the acceptance of the modern evolutionary view of Scripture which is based on those assured results of science and history which are due entirely to the operation of the Rational Consciousness.

The classic exposition of the settlement of the Church of England is Richard Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity*, and this was the first English book since the Reformation to recognise explicitly the use of reason.³

¹ The phrase is Cranmer's own, and the word *containeth*, with its extraordinary significance for modern Churchmen, is a testimony to his insight.

² See H. D. A. Major, *The Gospel of Freedom*, chap. vi.

³ The case of Reginald Peacock (? 1395-1460) should not be overlooked. He was a liberal of a limited kind born long before his time. It is significant that Hooker used the same arguments against the Puritans as Peacock had used in *The Repressor* against the Lollards (see Article by J. C. Hardwick in *The Modern Churchman* for March, 1922).

His words on Church practice have already been quoted.¹ He also says: "What Scripture doth plainly deliver, to that the first place both of credit and obedience is due: *the next whereunto is whatsoever any man can necessarily conclude by force of reason*: after these the voice of the Church succeedeth";² or again, "Companies of learned men, be they never so great and reverend, are to yield unto reason: the weight whereof is no whit prejudiced by the simplicity of his person which doth allege it, but being found to be sound and good, the bare opinion of men to the contrary must of necessity stoop and give place."³

It would be quite wrong, however, to assume that at the Reformation in the Church of England the Rational Consciousness was given a definite place, by the side of the Bible and the Church, as one of three great religious authorities. Its use was implicit rather than explicit; it was an unconscious rather than a conscious introduction of reason; it was employed for the practical purpose of producing rational arguments for the justification and maintenance of the new settlement. Yet, now it is known how much Cranmer was indebted to foreign reformers, it should be borne in mind that Luther had placed reason in an independent position by the side of Scripture, while Zwingli's views on divine immanence had led him to exalt reason as a "Word of God" in the soul.⁴

¹ Pp. 32, 36.

² Book V, section viii (2). (Italics mine.)

³ Book II, chap. vii, section 6. The whole of Book III, section viii, should be consulted.

⁴ See Beard, Hibbert Lectures, 1883, *The Reformation*, pp. 130 ff. and 153.

How this line of religious authority developed with the passage of time will be considered in the following chapters.

III

THE POSITION ASSIGNED TO THE SPIRITUAL CONSCIOUSNESS

If the place of the Rational and Moral Consciousness was recognised but dimly in these early stages of the formulation of the Church of England's doctrine, the understanding of the authority to be accorded to the Spiritual Consciousness was still more vague. There was certainly a stirring in men's hearts of the deep things of God. One writer ¹ says that the most characteristic feature of the English people, of the English Church and the English Nation in the sixteenth century was the prevailing sense of the presence of God. There were the Humanists: there had been the fourteenth-century school of English mystics: there had been Wyclif and the Lollards with their half-religious, half-political revolt against traditional religion, a hostility which one hundred and fifty years of persecution had not been able to quell. All these things must be taken into account as lying behind the apparently purely political act of Reformation made by Henry VIII in freeing English religion from the Papal domination. Without them, the Reformation could not have become what it was, a definite evolution in religion "which displaced the centre of the Christian Consciousness." ²

¹ A. V. G. Allen, *Freedom in the Church*, p. 161.

² A. Sabatier, *Outlines of a Philosophy of Religion*, pp. 213, 255.

But it is in the reshaping of the divine liturgy that is found the plainest expression of the authority accorded by the Church of England to the Spiritual Consciousness. "In the Christian liturgy, the deepest intuitions, the rich personal experiences, not only of the primitive but of the patristic and mediæval epochs, have found their perfect expression. Herein has been distilled, age by age, drop by drop, the very essence of the Mystical Consciousness."¹ But false developments and mediæval accretions, which did not illuminate but obscured the meaning of the rite, were removed by the English Reformers, and the three stages of the Christian's approach to God made plain and clear—the examination of self in the light of the New Covenant, the mystical union with Christ, the oblation of the whole self to God.

Further developments in the authority accorded to the Spiritual Consciousness will be dealt with in the following chapters.

IV

THE COMPREHENSIVENESS OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

Answers have now been given to three of the four questions which prefaced this chapter.

The Church of England, like the other two historic branches of the Catholic Church, *has* a doctrinal position of its own. Its basic authorities are those which are capable of an ideal synthesis if properly adjusted.² The order in which they were held at

¹ Evelyn Underhill, *The Mystic Way*, p. 335.

² See Chap. I.

the Tudor Settlement is the Bible, the Church, the Rational and Moral Consciousness, and the Spiritual Consciousness, only the two first being explicitly allowed, the rest being imperfectly yet increasingly understood. Nevertheless since all the authorities of the Christian religion were present and none were neglected, it will be seen at once that the Church of England possesses a comprehensiveness to which practical effect is given in the comparatively undogmatic character of its formularies, its order, and its discipline. Its formularies are brief compared with the voluminous catechism of the Council of Trent, the long dogmatic creed of Pius IV, and the wordy catechisms and confessions of the Eastern and Puritan Churches. Its order and discipline free the bishop from the Papacy, give the priest equal responsibility with the bishop in matters of faith, and raise the laity to a definite ideal of priesthood by giving them a Prayer-Book and an equal power of response with the clergy in the services.¹

The history of the Church of England since the Reformation shows what is the price which must be paid for the violation of this comprehensiveness.

If the *via media* of the Church of England was most preserved and best understood where, as in the case of Cranmer and Hooker, the rational element was most accentuated, the wisdom and judiciousness of these men were not, then as now, common gifts among religious disputants; without them it was inevitable that a spirit of dogmatism and contention should

¹ Cf. also A. Sabatier, *Outlines of a Philosophy of Religion*, p. 216.

soon prevail. Only "men who are deeply imbued with the spirit of earnest and impartial inquiry will invariably come to value such a disposition more than any particular doctrines to which it may lead them."¹ Conversely, when any set of dogmas are held exclusively, it is certain that the human spirit has been put in fetters. The struggles of seventeenth-century England to which we must now turn were entirely due to this cause. Appreciation of the comprehensiveness of the Church of England declined: the higher synthesis which had been achieved separated into its constituent elements of Protestant and Catholic; the spark of reason which united them had for the time being lost its power.

¹ Lecky, *The Rise and Influence of Rationalism in Europe*, p. 98. Plato's words concerning the State are equally true of the Church. "Until philosophers are kings, or the kings and princes of this world have the spirit and power of philosophy, and political greatness and wisdom meet in one, and those commoner natures who pursue either to the exclusion of the other are compelled to stand aside, cities will never have rest from their evils—no, nor the human race, as I believe—and then only will this one State have a possibility of life and behold the light of day." *The Republic*, Book V, 473 (Jowett's translation).

CHAPTER IV

THE APPEARANCE OF THE THREE HISTORIC PARTIES IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

UNFORTUNATELY the number of religious authorities in operation in the Reformation Settlement now began to be reduced by the growing hostility of rival Church parties, and in consequence the comprehensiveness of the Church suffered a serious limitation. Whereas before the Elizabethan Settlement the questions which agitated Englishmen were those concerning the repudiation of Papal authority and the doctrine of the Mass, controversy now centred in the question of church government. During the struggles of the first part of the seventeenth century the three great historic parties of the Church of England emerged and assumed their definite characteristics, and though at this stage all were within that Church's fold the situation became such as to threaten their successive elimination.

I

THE PURITANS AND PRESBYTERIANS

Throughout the whole period of the Tudor Settlement of the English Church "there was implied an organic relationship to the state: the king was regarded as directly and primarily the anointed of

God: the church was simply the whole nation in its religious aspect.”¹

A Biblical precedent was found for this in the history of Israel under David and Solomon and other “godly kings,” and in the early days of the English Reformation the Puritans agreed entirely with the Establishment, desiring but a simpler ritual and a stricter discipline.² However, under the influence of the Marian persecution and frequent enforced sojourns with the Calvinists of Switzerland and the Rhinelands, “the sight of Calvin’s strong and tranquil discipline” in his Church State of Geneva “smote them with a kind of passionate love.”³ From this time they found fault with the existing model of English Church polity as unscriptural. We thus see exactly how it is that Presbyterianism, *qua* Presbyterianism, is not English⁴ and tends to Dissent.

This anti-national tendency among Puritans unfortunately was aggravated by Elizabeth’s *Act of Uniformity* of 1559. In the same year there was a Scottish Revolution. In 1568, the followers of Robert Browne, who affected Puritan theology with a Presbyterian and Congregational system of church government, seceded from the Church of England, and in 1577 the natural expression of dissatisfaction on the part of those Puritans who remained in

¹ A. V. G. Allen, *The Continuity of Christian Thought*, p. 322.

² J. J. Tayler, *Religious Life in England*, p. 96.

³ G. H. Curteis, *Bampton Lectures*, 1871, p. 49.

⁴ This is testified by Nonconformists. Cf. Tulloch, *Rational Theology in the Seventeenth Century*, vol. i, p. 68, and J. J. Tayler, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

the Church of England was silenced by the suppression of the "Propheesyings,"¹ which, under the sympathetic but weak rule of Archbishop Grindal, had grown to such a degree as to threaten the influence and authority of the liturgy by law established. It was during the following years that the celebrated controversies took place, first between Archbishop Whitgift and Thomas Cartwright, and then between Richard Hooker and Walter Travers when, as Isaac Walton says speaking of the Temple Church, "the forenoon sermon spoke Canterbury, and the afternoon Geneva."²

Bills were promoted in 1584 and 1585 to curtail the power of bishops and strengthen the Presbyterian ideals.³ This was one of the turning points in the struggle. Elizabeth, on the advice of Whitgift, who was dubbed the Canterbury Caiaphas, proceeded in her government of the Church by canon and not by statute. "From this time . . . Puritanism gradually became less of a purely ecclesiastical and more of a parliamentary movement,"⁴ and this bond between the Puritans and the House of Commons was knit more closely after the rejection, by James I and his

¹ These were a kind of religious exercise whose Scriptural authority was supposed to be 1 Cor. xiv. 31. A previously appointed portion of Scripture was expounded for about half an hour by each of five or six ministers in order of their seniority, beginning with the youngest, and the whole then reviewed at greater length by the most experienced divine present. Solemn prayer and a public refectio closed the meeting (J. J. Tayler, *op. cit.*, p. 100).

² *The Works of Mr. Richard Hooker*, Preface, p. 41 (Oxford University Press), ed. 1845.

³ The Presbyterian system was so far organised that even a secret national assembly was held in 1587.

⁴ J. J. Tayler, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

advisers, of the Puritan demands at the Hampton Court Conference in 1604. Those Puritans who did not definitely join the sect of Independents who had seceded under the name of "Brownists" became "the source and strength of the great parliamentary action which now commenced against the hierarchy, and are usually described under the general name of Presbyterians."¹ Their party cry was the *jus divinum* of the Calvinistic theory of church government, and they believed in no form of church government or ceremony but such as was clearly Scriptural.

II

THE LAUDIANS

As a result of the growing hostility and alienation of English Puritanism and Presbyterianism, what may be called the loyal section of the Church of England began to exhibit a marked alteration from its aspect in the days of Parker and Whitgift. The determining factor in this situation was Elizabeth's action against the Puritans in 1585 by the exercise of her royal prerogative.² Perhaps the first traces of the change are to be found in Bancroft's sermon preached against the Puritans at St. Paul's Cross in 1588. From this time, while the Puritans denounced it as a "man-made institution," episcopacy allied itself more and more to the Crown, and under Bancroft, Laud, and Andrewes the *jus divinum* of kings and bishops became the second popular party cry of the times; the other, as we have seen, being the *jus divinum* of Presbyterian

¹ J. J. Tayler, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

² See p. 45.

government. Inasmuch as this new party pursued an aggressive church polity and temper which owed much to the religious but injudicious zeal of William Laud, it came finally to be identified with his methods and ideals and received the name of "Laudian." Laudianism, with its reverence for tradition and long-established institutions, was entirely true to the spirit and constitution of the Church of England in so far as it rested its foundations on the second of those two principles which went to form the *via media*—the authority of primitive practice—but this was now overstressed by the Laudian churchmen, just as the first of those two principles—the authority of the Bible—was overstressed by the opposing Presbyterians. The sphere of practice was made to encroach upon the sphere of doctrine and *vice versa*, so that primitive church customs which had been adopted and sanctioned because they were profitable were now demanded, not on the ground of practical utility, but as constituting an essential element of the Church of Christ. In other words; what had formerly been retained and defended as of the *bene esse* of the Church was now declared to be of the Church's *esse*.

"From this time we hear again the familiar refrain . . . of that *doctrine* of apostolic succession, which had been elaborated in the Latin Church under Tertullian, Irenæus, and Cyprian." ¹ In point of fact this dogmatic conception of the hierarchy had not been realised during the period of the Reformation

¹ A. V. G. Allen, *The Continuity of Christian Thought*, p. 329.

Settlement.¹ Although there was much correspondence between Cranmer and Parker on the subject of the threefold ministry and its retention, no question arose in the sixteenth century as to the dependence of the validity of the ministry of the Church of England upon its possession of the Apostolic Succession.² For example, when Queen Elizabeth wished "to accentuate the Catholic side of English religion, she did not assert the unbroken succession of the bishops; she increased the ceremonial in her chapel."³

Again, as Matthew Arnold pointed out, Hooker's great work was written, not because episcopalianism is essential, but because its impugnors maintained that presbyterianism is essential and episcopalianism is sinful.⁴

The opposition between the fanatical Presbyterians and the Laudians was also aggravated by the emphasis of the latter on certain true features of the English

¹ See p. 33.

² The phrase is here used with the usual stress on the first word. If the emphasis is placed on the second word, in accordance with the arguments of Irenæus against the Gnostics, the present-day controversy on the subject becomes largely irrelevant (see Prof. Turner's Essay in *The Early History of the Church and Ministry*, ed. by Dr. Swete).

³ A. Fawkes, *The Genius of the English Church*, p. 11. Cf. also A. C. Headlam, *The Doctrine of the Church and Reunion*, pp. 310 f.

⁴ Quoted from *Culture and Anarchy*, p. xxxvii, by A. V. G. Allen, *The Continuity of Christian Thought*, p. 328. It is to be suspected that some modern Anglo-Catholics who quote with approval Hooker's rationalistic defence of episcopacy and traditional Church Order, have not realised his essential position as the defender of the *via media*, and still less his place in the history of the evolution of the Rational Consciousness in the English Church.

Church which had been neglected increasingly by the Puritans. These were—

(1) The importance of the Sacraments.

(2) The social principle of Catholicism, especially that in respect of our salvation the Church both precedes and co-operates with individual effort.

(3) The importance of patristic study for purposes of precedent and exegesis.¹ The writings of the Fathers were regarded as storehouses from which might be drawn ecclesiastical and liturgical models, and from which assistance might be obtained in the interpretation of "hard places of Scripture."²

Finally, these differences between Laudianism and Presbyterianism were made insuperable by the introduction of Arminian theology³ into the Church of England under the patronage of James I and his favourite bishops.

Withal, the Laudian party were genuine children of the Reformation, loyal to all the fundamentals

¹ This study of the Fathers by the Reformation scholars was one of the factors which commenced the dissolution of tradition into ecclesiastical history. It received enormous impetus by the discovery of the Forged Decretals, a forgery which, having been first suspected by the Roman Cardinal Laurentius Valla and made known to Europe by the Protestant historians of Magdeburg, was acknowledged by the great Church historian, Baronius, as early as 1607 (see Headlam, *History, Authority and Theology*, p. 232, and Curteis, *Bampton Lectures* (1871), p. 151.

² Cf. The Sermon by John Hales, *Abuses of Hard Places in Scripture*. "All that was necessary in the Apostles' time is now necessary, and much more . . . the knowledge of the state and succession of Doctrine in the Church from time to time. . . ."

³ See pp. 55 ff.

of the Reformation Settlement of the English Church,¹ though limited in their appreciation of its genius and certainly shortsighted in their ecclesiastical policy of "Thorough." At the same time it is of importance to note that the repudiation of the Papacy and the doctrine of the Mass which their position involved, constituted a new variation of Catholicism which was distinctively English and neither Roman nor Greek. To define it is no easy matter; but it was certainly marked by a degree of freedom and flexibility, and a consequent power of adaptation, which is largely lacking in the rigid Catholicism of other types—the Roman in organisation and the Greek in doctrine. Hence when English Catholicism ceases to be liberal it ceases to be English, for the insistence upon the traditional rigidity of either ecclesiastical organisation or ecclesiastical dogma is logically bound to move to a position outside the Church of England. This liberal element in Catholicism is of course due to the introduction of reason—sanctified reason—to a position of authority along with Scripture and tradition. For example, in the controversy between Laud and Fisher the Jesuit, Laud asserts that nothing can keep a man from weighing

¹ *E.g.* Laud enumerated at his trial "the men of great abilities" and "persons of great place" whom he had "settled in the true Protestant religion established in England." On the scaffold he asserted that the king was "as sound a Protestant, according to the religion by law established, as any man in his dominions." Charles I vindicated this character for himself in his dying instructions to his children. The apparent avoidance of the word "Protestant" by Isaac Walton, says Professor E. W. Watson, is not characteristic of any other Anglican writer among his contemporaries.

at the balance of reason the Word of God, the tradition of the Church and all testimonies within ;¹ that reason can go so high as to " prove the Christian Religion . . . stands upon surer grounds of nature, reason, common equity and justice " ² than any other religion ; that the mysteries of faith do not " contradict reason or the principles thereof." ³

It is instructive also to observe that Laud, in defending the Scriptural basis of the Church of England, does so by putting forward four propositions of which he says : " No one of these doth it alone " :—

(1) The testimony of the Church. This is too weak by itself because the Church is not absolutely divine.

(2) The testimony of Scripture to itself. This is *prima facie* insufficient.

(3) The testimony of the Holy Ghost within us. This is able to infuse faith in man since the same Spirit dictated the Scriptures.

(4) The testimony provided by natural reason. This enables us " to disprove that which misguided men conceive against it."

When these facts are borne in mind it is easy to perceive how the third Church party—the first group of seventeenth-century latitudinarians—sprang from the bosom of the Laudian party.⁴

¹ *A Relation of the Conference between William Laud and Mr. Fisher, the Jesuit*, section 15, xiv.

² *Ibid.*, section 15, xiv.

³ *Ibid.*, section 15, xv. See also xvi and several other parts of the book.

⁴ Further evidence of the liberal nature of Reformed English Catholicism may be found in its connections with

III

THE FIRST MOVEMENT OF RATIONAL THOUGHT IN THE
SEVENTEENTH CENTURY—THE FALKLAND SCHOOL

In the early days of Charles I English religion and English politics were becoming disastrously divided by the mutual recriminations of two implacable parties, the supporters of two opposing conceptions of divine right. These two parties however, even if they are made to include the Brownist dissenters and the Papist recusants who formed the extreme left wing of either party, did not comprise the whole of the nation, for there grew up from 1620 onwards a group of men more moderate and liberal in their outlook. These divines of the Falkland school were clear-headed, patriotic and religious Englishmen who although they had points of contact with both Puritans and Laudians cannot possibly be regarded as adherents of either party. They sympathised with Laudianism in its respect for the sacred character of royalty, its attachment to the ancient episcopal form of Church government, and the spirit of reverence and comeliness which marked its liturgical ideal. Men of refinement both in intellect and manners,

some of the foreign rational theologians who found themselves "anglicans ready-made" before the end of the seventeenth century: Saravia, the friend of Hooker; Isaac Casaubon, the friend of Andrewes; Gerhard Johann Voss—who was recommended by Laud to Charles I—and his son Isaac, who became Canons of Canterbury and Windsor respectively; Pierre le Courayer, the friend of Atterbury (see Beard, *The Reformation*, pp. 332 f.).

these early Latitudinarians delighted in the "perfect lineaments" of the British Church, "neither too mean nor yet too gay,"¹ but were repelled by the rigid dogmatism and cruel intolerance which characterised aggressive Laudianism especially in the proceedings of the Court of High Commission.² Therefore they sympathised with Puritanism in its detestation of the Laudian tyranny in enforcing religious uniformity in trifles by the infliction of penalties which were oftentimes out of all proportion to the magnitude of the offence. But they recoiled at once from the "Root and Branch" policy of the Puritans when it would have left the Church in "shreds"³ as George Herbert says, and when revolutionary innovations were propounded for the government of Church and State.

It is clear that this new party—or rather this group of like-minded men—possessed all the marks of the *via media* as expounded by Hooker. Reason was their guide in the use and interpretation of its two basic principles—the Bible and primitive practice. The chief names among them were Lucius Cary Lord Falkland, the "ever-memorable" John Hales of Eton and William Chillingworth. Jeremy Taylor may be included among them and Edward Stillingfleet

¹ George Herbert, *The British Church* (in *The Temple*).

² *E.g.* there were many convictions for blasphemy, "which were doubtless due either to insanity or to the too literal interpretation, by persons of no education and of unbalanced minds, of the English version of the Holy Scriptures." W. H. Hutton, *The English Church*, vol. vi, pp. 70 f. (Series edited by Stephens and Hunt).

³ *Church Rents and Schisms* (*The Temple*).

represented their spirit at a later date, on the eve of the Restoration.

The rational spirit was at work in England in the days of Falkland's youth and had its influence on the graver philosophical and theological associates of his riper years. John Selden, lawyer and statesman, was greatly admired by Falkland and imparted to the latter something of his own "cynical thoughtfulness and contempt of extremes, something of his own clearness and liberality in religious matters."¹ Even the gay Suckling, who celebrated in verse Falkland and his youthful friends, wrote a brief treatise entitled *An Account of Religion by Reason*. Sir Henry Wotton, the ambassador of Elizabeth and James at Venice and a close friend of John Hales, had finished his education abroad in contact with Beza and Isaac Casaubon, and had the most marked abhorrence of "the prevalent spirit of religious contentiousness." It is instructive to note that he spent a year at Leyden in contact with Arminius, whom he testified to be "a man of most rare learning . . . of a most strict life, and of a most meek spirit."² Nicholas Ferrar, the founder of the famous religious community at Little Gidding, was so averse to controversial strife that it was said he "would scarce venture to opine even in the Points wherein the world censured him possessed."³

¹ Tulloch, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 90.

² See Walton's *Lives* (ed. C. H. Dick), p. 103.

³ Barnabas Oley's "Life of George Herbert" in *The Country Parson*. A delightful account of life at Little Gidding is given in Shorthouse's romance *John Inglesant*.

If the practical needs of the general religious and political situation at this time stirred men to the use of their rational faculties, the spirit of reason abroad in the Church of England was quickened by two other important factors, the spread of Arminianism and "the unceasing activity and marvellous seductions of Jesuitism."¹ Concerning the latter no more need be said than that the missionary activity of Rome at this time was untiring, and that the number of secessions to that communion was very great. But Jesuitism counted for little compared with Arminianism as an influence in the English Church of this period.

When John Hales "bid John Calvin 'Good-night'" at the conclusion of the Synod of Dort in 1618 the future of Arminianism in England was assured, though Hales himself, as Tulloch remarks, did not deliberately turn and "say 'Good-morning' to Arminius."² But before this, the opinions known as Arminian had been steadily gaining ground, though it is difficult to estimate how far these were due to Arminius himself and not to a natural reaction against Calvinism, or to the influence of Hooker, Casaubon, and others.³ It is perhaps safe to say that

¹ Tulloch, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 74.

² *Ibid.*, p. 191.

³ *E.g.* Laud seems to have considered that the English Articles originally had no Calvinistic sense. His Preface to the Articles, written in 1628 and still published with the Articles in our Prayer-Book, where it says that "no man hereafter shall either print or preach to draw the article aside any way," plainly refers to Calvinistic interpretations. It is significant nevertheless that this Preface was not written

Arminianism, as a definite theology, had little direct effect on English theological thought in the early seventeenth century, but that as a method of theological research it had direct and increasing influence from the time of Hales onward. For this reason the discussion of Arminianism has been reserved until now.

Arminian theology arose "from the fundamental modification of the cardinal doctrine of predestination initiated by Arminius."¹ The popular deity of Calvinism was arbitrary, inhuman and inscrutable, a kind of magnified Henry VIII without the sexual instincts, and man was his slave and chattel. Arminianism, in opposition to this, admitted the free activity of the human will in the process of salvation: it emphasised the love of God by asserting that His will was that all men should be saved, and consequently considerably modified the current doctrine of God's grace.²

Although Arminianism in these affirmations was hostile to Calvinism it is of great importance to note that it arose out of the same theological background. Both systems rested on Augustinianism. Calvin stressed the harsh predestinarianism of Augustine which exalted God's power and justice at the expense of man's freedom: Arminius and his successors stressed the opposite elements in the thought of the great Doctor of Grace, especially that of the Holy Spirit. Ten years after the Synod of Dort, by which time Laud was undoubtedly influenced by Arminianism. See also p. 31.

¹ Tulloch, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 16.

² See article, "Arminianism," by F. Platt, in *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. i, p. 813.

Trinity as *amans, amatus, amor*.¹ It is just here where the theological connection comes in with the English movement broadly known as Laudianism, an integral factor in which was the doctrine of grace conveyed by an Apostolic ministry and regular sacraments. Helpful and attractive as this doctrine is to not a few it is always in danger of degenerating into a rigid and mechanical formalism, and this danger it did not now wholly escape. In the hands of the Laudians, Arminian theology became only one among other existing forms of dogmatism.

Inasmuch as Arminianism secured its influence primarily as the outcome of a moral revolt against Calvinism—as the protest of the violated Moral Consciousness—its first result was to set the Rational Consciousness to work.² Thus in the necessary process of self-defence Arminianism rapidly became a new method of rational inquiry,³ and in this aspect its career in England has been long-lived and influential. The place assigned to reason by Laud, in his defence of a Scriptural Catholicism as against a Papal Catholicism, has already been mentioned.⁴ But the rational spirit went even deeper with the Falkland school of divines and it expressed itself in their attitude to three departments of theology—Scriptural, confessional, dogmatic—changing at once the nature of the authority of each.

(1) Scripture was regarded as directive in its

¹ *De Trinitate*.

² See pp. 8, 18.

³ Cf. Tulloch, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

⁴ The Controversy with the Jesuit, Fisher. See pp. 50 f.

authority. The great truths it enshrined were self-evident or axiomatic and in their direct action on the individual conscience guaranteed the private "liberty of prophesying" which was the right of all Christians. Chillingworth especially gained lasting fame in defending this position by his book *The Religion of Protestants*.

(2) Creeds and confessions were regarded as having "no other design but to testify *not what was to be believed* but what the authors of them believed." ¹ As expositions of the "Religion of Protestants" Chillingworth brushes them all aside for "that wherein they all agree and which they all subscribe . . . the Bible." ² Even the Apostles' Creed, to which Chillingworth pays great respect and reverence, is said to contain "only such general heads as were most befitting and requisite for preaching the Faith of Christ to Jews and Gentiles." ³

(3) Lastly, dogma as understood by these liberal thinkers did not constitute Christianity, and herein lies their most important contribution to English religious thought. The whole dogmatic conception of the Church, its ministry and its sacraments, gave place to one more rational, moral, and spiritual. John Hales perhaps of all the group speaks most clearly on the relations of religion to dogmatic orthodoxy. He saw that there was a fallible, transient, human element in all theological opinion, and hence said

¹ Tulloch, *op. cit.*, p. 30, translating from the Preface to Confession, *Opera Episcopii*, ii, Pars. Sec. p. 71.

² *The Religion of Protestants*.

³ *Ibid.*, iii, 8.

clearly that "heresy is an act of the will, not of reason, and is indeed a lie, not a mistake. . . ." ¹ Theological error and religious orthodoxy were not, according to the views of members of this group, necessarily impossible bed-fellows. Perhaps they might have said that right conclusions were less important than right methods: certainly they said that right opinions mattered less than Christian love and tolerance.

The spirit of rationalism apparent in the recorded utterances and extant writings of Falkland and his school is thus seen to give a reality which Calvinism never gave to that claim for the freedom of the individual conscience which is the grand and abiding truth of Protestantism.

Broad-minded and clear-sighted however as these early liberals were, it is to be doubted how far any of them visualised clearly the deep doctrinal problems which were involved. Their theology was in a measure inconsequent, and thus formed a stage of transition to a group of thinkers who deserve to exercise a far deeper and wider influence in the English Church than has actually been their lot—the Cambridge Platonists.

¹ Tract on *Schism*.

IV

(1) THE MORAL CONSCIOUSNESS ASSERTS ITSELF—THE
BAPTISTS(2) THE SPIRITUAL CONSCIOUSNESS ASSERTS ITSELF—
THE QUAKERS

On the eve, then, of the outbreak of the Civil War, these three ecclesiastical parties existed in the Church of England: the Puritans, who insisted on the abolition of prelatical episcopacy and monarchical absolutism; the Laudians, who insisted that prelatical episcopacy and monarchical absolutism had divine sanction; and a Liberal school which strove to effect peace between the other two by upholding the ideal of an unprelatical episcopacy and a constitutional monarchy.

It will be seen that the whole struggle resolved itself entirely into one over the question of authority. Each of the two extreme parties claimed the direct sanction of God for their respective systems of theological and ritual uniformity, and represented these systems as having received the impress of an incontrovertible *external* authority. The Liberals saw that the arguments of Puritan and Laudian alike did not go deep enough, and that even Roman Catholicism was being equally well defended on the same background of ideas. They recognised, without seeing all that it involved, that the questions at issue must be approached in a radically different manner, and

accordingly appealed to an *internal* and not to an external authority.

For the time being a weak and arbitrary government concentrated the dissatisfaction of the country on the monarchy with its claim to divine right—"the right divine of kings to govern wrong" as the poet Pope named it. With the overthrow of the monarchy and the decapitation of king and archbishop, Laudianism was temporarily suppressed. The strength of the triumphant Parliament lay in the body of Independents headed by Cromwell, and it is due to this alone that a system of fanatical Presbyterianism (such as was represented by the majority of the Westminster Assembly) did not entirely dominate the country. As it was, only the death of Cromwell prevented the establishment of Independency as the religious system of England. If however the hostile parties, the Laudians, and the Presbyterians suffered check under the regime of Cromwell, the outbreak of the human spirit which had been manifested in the rationalism of the third party was not easily to be thwarted. Denied the proper vehicle for its expression in the Church of England it was forced underground so to speak, and consequently burst forth in channels aside from the main stream of its evolution. Thus the Baptists in 1633 and the Quakers in 1646 became separatist religious bodies, thereby exemplifying not only the fissiparous nature of Protestantism, but its fundamental demand for the rights of personality and the freedom of the human spirit. Wherever Protestantism thrives, there follows inevitably "a higher reverence for the spirit in man, in

all its manifestations—in the reason, the moral nature, and the inward sphere of the affections.”¹ It was an unbalanced appreciation of this, however, which drove the Baptists and Quakers, and later the Unitarians, into sectarianism; the relation of authority to freedom is the great question which Protestantism has yet to solve. Therefore, at the unchecked bidding of the Moral Consciousness, the Baptists now became a nonconformist sect; and to satisfy the claims of the Spiritual Consciousness, the Quakers took up a position outside of organised Christianity. The exclusive overstressing of the Rational Consciousness however did not take place till the secession of the Unitarians²—perhaps because there did not yet exist in the country a sufficiently numerous educated or semi-educated class. It should be noted too that the Rational Consciousness would not be likely to feel seriously outraged except over intellectual questions. It was over fundamental questions of doctrine, therefore, that the Unitarians seceded, and the doctrinal and philosophical basis of the troubles now under discussion had not yet been properly examined. Accordingly these present troubles assumed the appearance of differences over questions of church organisation and church ceremonies, though the real reasons for their origin were rooted in the Moral Consciousness and in the Spiritual Consciousness.

The method adopted by the Baptists took the

¹ A. V. G. Allen, *The Continuity of Christian Thought*, p. 317.

² See pp. 105 ff.

form of extreme attention paid to the ritual of admission; that of the Quakers, abandonment of all external ritual whatsoever.¹ But the call of the inner voice sounded urgently behind these outward questions of ritual regularity. The dominating idea of the Baptist was really that of the "purity" of the Church in its internal relations;² of the Quaker, that of the unfettered spirituality of the Church. To the Baptist the ceremony of Baptism without an inner change of heart or conversion to God was not only unmeaning but immoral. The national Church and existing Nonconformist communions seemed to him alike unscriptural in their organisation and lax in their discipline. To the Quaker, on the other hand, all ceremonies meant nothing, and were even regarded as positive hindrances to the life of the Spirit. He found that God spoke directly to his heart in mystical communion, and in the intensity and reality of this contact he proclaimed his sole allegiance to the "inner light." It was not the Scriptures, cried George Fox on a memorable day in his life, by which all doctrines, religions and opinions were to be tried, but "the *Holy Spirit*, by which the holy men of God gave forth the Scriptures."³

To satisfy the demands of the Moral Consciousness and of the Spiritual Consciousness the Baptists and the Quakers went outside the fold of the national

¹ G. H. Curteis, *Bampton Lectures*, 1871, pp. 209, 245.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Journal*, I. 75 (seventh edition, 1852). This idea was embodied in the third of the Fifteen Propositions set out by Barclay in his *Apology for the Quakers* (G. H. Curteis, *op. cit.*, pp. 248, 281.)

Church. Their importance for the present purpose is that they, like the Falkland school, represent a transition movement away from the absolutism of external authority in religion.

V

THE SECOND MOVEMENT OF RATIONAL THOUGHT
IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY—THE CAMBRIDGE
PLATONISTS

These stirrings of the Rational, Moral, and Spiritual Consciousness in the first half of the seventeenth century have the deepest significance, for they mark the beginning of an attempt, in which England led the way, to construct theology afresh on a basis entirely different from Calvinism. This basis involved nothing less than a new idea of God. The Cambridge Platonists worked this out in the latter half of the seventeenth century but for the rest it was not understood, and for this reason the religious issues of the first half of the century were confined seemingly to questions of church polity and ritual regularity. Even "towards the end of the century, William Penn (1644-1718) and John Bunyan (1628-1688) wrote out of a background of ideas very much the same as that of Milton's youth, although the Commonwealth and Restoration, and the popularising of Galileo's discoveries had intervened."¹ In those however in whom the rational and mystical spirit had come to fullest self-con-

¹ L. Dougall and C. W. Emmet, *The Lord of Thought*, p. 55.

sciousness, we find at once that the debated questions were doctrinal and philosophical. To appreciate this, it is necessary to understand that it is only upon an entirely different idea of God that Catholicism and Protestantism can be reconciled.

The philosophical differences between Catholicism and Protestantism are negligible. Both appeal to an external authority. Their actual difference is that in the last resort the Catholic submits his reason to the authority of the Church and the Protestant submits his to the authority of the Bible. The philosophy which underlies both Catholicism and Protestantism is based on conceptions such as are the outgrowth of the old uncritical pre-Kantian realism. "Here the Absolute is conceived as a reality independent of, and sharply contrasted with, all relative or finite existence : a being supernatural in nature, and as such belonging to a different world from the realm of second causes which we call nature ; yet touching it at points many or few, and capable, under proper conditions, of becoming in a true sense an object of human knowledge." ¹

If such a postulate as this is accepted, then the claims of Church and Bible to infallible authority are rational. The supernatural sphere is thought of as apart from the natural, and the only proofs of the divine nature of Christianity are certain external marks—miracles and predictions—added "as a seal is added to a document to certify the genuineness of the handwriting" : ² the Infinite, moreover, is regarded

¹ W. A. Brown, *The Essence of Christianity*, p. 15.

² *Ibid.*, p. 22.

as the complete antithesis of the Finite, and therefore the existence of God too may only be proved in "irruptions" into the natural order of things.

When God is thus regarded, He is felt and realised in human life only indirectly, and so the internal witness of the spirit in the heart of man, for Catholic and Protestant alike, is restricted in its validity to the assurance of the individual alone.¹ The technical doctrine of the Holy Spirit as the Third Person of the Trinity witnesses to a certain theological uneasiness in Christian circles concerning the old conception of God as only transcendent. But the issue involved was only vaguely grasped, so that the Holy Spirit has either been materialised into a third Personality, distinct from the Father and the Son, or else has

¹ Cf. William Laud's third proposition in the controversy with Fisher (see p. 51). Likewise Richard Baxter, in the second of his four discourses on *The Unreasonableness of Infidelity* (written some time before his exclusion from the Church of England by the Act of Uniformity of 1662), section xix, says: "The principal use of this internal testimony . . . is for the establishment of the believer himself."

Baxter, however, showed himself dissatisfied with this statement and claimed a wider sphere of authority for the "internal testimony." "Yet," he goes on to say, "how would human intercourse be maintained and human affairs transacted, if such testimonies as these shall be judged invalid?" And in section xviii he argues that "the image of God is more easily discerned in the effects or impress upon our own hearts, than in the word alone. . . . The effect is something more express and operative, and in that respect more illustrious, than the word itself."

Richard Baxter thus has a definite place in the evolution of the authority of the Mystical Consciousness in the Church of England—a place which may perhaps be compared with that of Hooker in the evolution of the authority of the Rational Consciousness. The ideas of both men found full expression in the Cambridge Platonists.

evaporated into a mere "scholastic abstraction." Thus, classical theology has been almost inarticulate on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.¹

These conceptions of God and Christianity, which exalt God's transcendence and almost if not quite succeed in banishing His immanence, frankly flout all modern notions of science. Anything approaching an inductive science of religion becomes an impossibility. Tests which are based upon a present human experience cannot be applied to the Church's doctrines, and so the Church itself becomes cut off from the world, an esoteric and obscurantist society.

As early as the end of the twelfth century Duns Scotus had discredited reason as the supreme means of attaining to a real knowledge of God and the universe, by affirming that the same thing might be theologically true but philosophically false.² Like a true Franciscan he fell back on the supremacy of Faith. In the sixteenth century the naturalist philosopher Francis Bacon openly proclaimed a divorce between philosophy and theology. While he supposes the one to follow "the light of nature," the other, he says, "is grounded only upon the word and oracle of God." Such a frank dualism was impossible to men of a religious

¹ See article on "Transcendence and Immanence," by Prof. Pringle-Pattison, in *The Spirit* (ed. Canon Streeter), and see pp. 100 ff., of this book, where this question is discussed in its bearings on revelation and evolution.

² In this conclusion, Duns exhibited the weakness of the scholastic method. Thomas Aquinas had opened out the way for this *reductio ad absurdum* by distinguishing two sources of divine knowledge, revelation and reason, the function of the latter being to justify and explain the former.

nature who yet gave their allegiance to the growing science of exact knowing. Thus there began to grow up in Latin Christianity a new conception of God as entering into human life—a God who is not only transcendent but also immanent in the world and in the human soul—of Whom knowledge may be had, mediated by the human reason, as a present element in all experience. Such a conception of God satisfies both the Spiritual Consciousness and the Rational Consciousness, and the ideal combination of mystic and rationalist which alone could achieve it was found in a small section of the English Church in the seventeenth century—the Christian Platonists of Cambridge. The rise of this new philosophical and religious school may be dated conveniently from 1644, in which year Benjamin Whichcote became Provost of King's College, Cambridge.

The thought of these Cambridge Platonists, which enabled them to construct a great speculative system, is in direct line with that of the Greek Fathers, especially Clement of Alexandria and Origen, and it was mediated to them from John Scotus Erigena, who was a product of the schools of England,¹ through the German mystics of the fourteenth century.²

¹ The association of this great Celtic thinker with Oxford and Alfred the Great is regarded by some as probably legendary. See Miss Alice Gardner, *Studies in John the Scot*, pp. 14 f., and contrast H. S. Chamberlain, *Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*, vol. ii, p. 90 n.

² It is instructive to note how often England has led the way in advancing new thought. It was the great thought of Erigena, mediated to Luther by the fourteenth-century German mystics, which brought about the Reformation in Northern Europe. Luther was also glad to appeal for support

Thus Dr. W. R. Inge says of Erigena that "He is the father not only of western mysticism and scholasticism, but of rationalism as well,"¹ and H. S. Chamberlain, that he was "the real pioneer of a genuinely Christian Religion."²

With the Cambridge Platonists then, in spite of certain extravagances and a tendency in some of them to over-credulity, there dawned one of those golden ages when science and philosophy may be found in harmony with religion; but the synthesis, alas, was achieved only in a Cambridge combination room and not in the Church at large. The human spirit, foiled in its efforts to find expression in the sphere of Church politics—in the circle of Falkland and his friends at Great Tew—or in the sphere of ritual regularities and irregularities—among the Baptists and Quakers—now broke out again in a sphere of much wider scope, because untrammelled by practical considerations either of Church or State. The Cambridge Platonists came upon the scene when the old ideas of authority were fast ceasing to grip men's minds. These ideas had been well enough, nay essential, when Loyola and his zealous and able Jesuits had threatened England with the Counter-Reformation, for the domination of one external authority—the Roman Church—

to the writings of John Huss (see Lechler's *Life of Wycliffe*, p. 2) who conducted the Reformation in Bohemia under the direct influence of Wycliffe's books which Jerome Faulfisch had carried away from England.

Again, the rational theology known to-day as "German Rationalism," owed its impetus to the English Rationalism of the eighteenth century (see p. 95).

¹ *Bampton Lectures*, 1899, p. 138.

² *Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*, vol. ii, p. 90, n.

could only be overthrown for religious Englishmen by the setting up of another external authority—the Bible. To achieve this end, Calvin had conceived a Biblical system in the mould of his relentless scholastic logic, but by presenting the Bible as a purely external authority—the sole medium of God's revelation of Himself to man—he failed to appeal to the authority of the Rational, Moral, and Spiritual Consciousness.

The reign of the authority of the Bible in England only served to produce "swarms of sectaries." There was nothing done to prevent the rejection of all religious authority which followed inevitably on the separation effected by Francis Bacon and others between philosophy and theology. The reign of the authority of the Church under the Laudian régime was similarly ineffective to meet the rising needs.

The Cambridge Platonists undertook the systematic exposition of the rights of the Rational, Moral, and Spiritual Consciousness. Consequently they were true to their Puritan ancestry in "their root thought—the sacredness of religious conviction, and the absolute authority of conscience therein."¹ At the same time, they upheld the liturgy and were devoted to the constitution of the national Church with its "decent grandeur and splendour" as Henry More described it. Such a combination marks them out as the true inheritors of the Reformation Settlement, a fact which is made clear by Joseph Glanvill, a younger and less known member of the group.

¹ Tulloch, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 460.

According to Glanvill,¹ "they thought it not enough to read a few systems to understand the correct orthodoxy of the times, or to gain the faculty of speaking to the people in the taking tone and phrase. But they read the histories of the Church and the Fathers of the first three centuries. In them they looked for the doctrine and practice that were in the beginning, and considered that religion was most pure in those primitive times."

However not only did the Cambridge Platonists uphold a constitutional theory of the Church, such as had obtained with Falkland and his school, but they carried on the latter's conception of the Church as primarily moral and spiritual, not institutional or ritual. Most important of all, they worked out and developed into a *principle*, the distinction which Hales especially, had drawn between dogma and religion.

This principle is the basis on which rests whatever measure of religious toleration was gained from the struggles of the seventeenth century. Religious persecution is bound to ensue whenever dogma is accorded higher honour than personal devotion to, and imitation of, the Saviour. "The state of religion," according to Whichcote, "lies in a good mind, and a good life: all else is about religion: and men must not put the instrumental part of religion for the state of religion."² When such a position as this is reached, when devotion is exalted above dogma, a new idea of God will always be found to have entered in, for dogma is now conceived as mediated by fallible

¹ *Anti-Fanatical Religion and Free Philosophy*, p. 9.

² *Aphorisms*, No. 835.

and human, though God-inspired, reason, and not as imposed upon men's minds from outside. At the same time, communion with God is seen to rest upon a community of nature between man and God. The divine nature is no longer regarded as different in kind from human nature, and a progressive knowledge of God is thus mediated by the human reason in its triune aspect as "the logic of the whole personality"—rational, moral, and spiritual. "The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord" ¹ was the sentence which was always on the lips of Benjamin Whichcote. "Take away reason," said Henry More, ² "and all religions are alike true—as the Light being removed, all things are of one colour." The Christian philosophy of John Smith was moulded on the thought of Plotinus, the founder of Neo-Platonism. All these men paid enthusiastic homage to the spirit of Plato as embodied, for example, in the famous saying of Clement of Alexandria—"The image of God is the divine and royal Logos, and the image of the image is the human reason." ³

A parallel with Descartes must not be overlooked in the aim of the Cambridge Platonists to heal, "in the great centre of reason," the schism effected by Bacon between philosophy and theology. But the problem which "Descartes contemplated as a pure thinker and speculative enthusiast," the Cambridge Platonists contemplated as Christian theologians. ⁴

¹ *Prov.* xx, 27. The Hebrew is more correctly rendered thus: "The lamp of the Lord is the soul of Man."

² Preface to *Collection of Philosophical Writings*.

³ *Stromateis*, lib. v, c. 14.

⁴ See Tulloch, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 18 f.

Since the time of Descartes, the higher thought of Europe, says Lecky, has been tending to the spirit of impartial inquiry which lies behind this method. It has achieved signal success in the realms of history (even ecclesiastical) and politics.

But the Church of England was not ready, either in the seventeenth century or for long afterwards, to receive so sublime a gospel. The rational element in the Cambridge Platonists was destined to receive such disproportionate attention in the eighteenth century as to exclude the mystical element. Natural science, with its doctrines of a creative process still proceeding and a creative force existing within the universe and not simply outside it, was required to create the point of view which would make the spiritual theology of the Cambridge Platonists credible and acceptable to the many. The great achievements of the human spirit in the Cambridge Platonists were destined soon to be submerged and forgotten in the recrudescence of religious and political conflict towards the end of the seventeenth century.

CHAPTER V

THE MOVEMENTS OF RELIGIOUS THOUGHT IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

I

OUTSTANDING FEATURES OF THE CENTURY

THREE outstanding features of the eighteenth century need to be noted at the outset.

(1) The first is the recoil from religious sectarianism. The religious ideals of the seventeenth century had been shaped under stress and suffering, during a period when life itself was often-times precarious, and as a consequence they bear the marks of their moulding in a certain spirit of world-renunciation and romantic piety. The enthusiasm with which these different ideals were upheld, at a time when no clear perception of the nature of authority in religion had been attained, was the cause of the religious sectarianism which was characteristic of the seventeenth century. In the eighteenth century every form of enthusiasm¹ was viewed askance. In consequence of this reaction, the eighteenth century came to be dominated by a world-embracing spirit which degenerated into rationalistic utilitarianism and religious apathy. Matthew Arnold might have said

¹ There are innumerable examples of this, *e.g.* Dr. A. C. Headlam, in one of his lectures, quoted the following inscription on a Church bell dated 1762: "Prosperity to the Established Church and no encouragement to Enthusiasm." The reference is plainly to Methodism.

that the religion of the eighteenth century was morality untouched with emotion. Yet there is one respect in which the religion of the eighteenth century may be likened unto that of the seventeenth century. The conflict between the two external religious authorities, Church and Bible, in the seventeenth century, had led many—like the Cambridge Platonists with their forerunners the Falkland school, the Quakers, Richard Baxter, Thomas Traherne, and the Anglican mystical poets, George Herbert, Donne, Crashaw, Quarles, and Vaughan the Silurian—to fall back upon an internal religious authority, the inward witness of the spirit in the heart.¹ Similarly, throughout the eighteenth century, it was sought to give primary place to an internal religious authority, but not to the same one. Before the Methodist revival, the authority of the Rational Consciousness was exalted; afterwards, that of religious feeling and emotionalism, a reduced form of the Mystical Consciousness.² The reaction to the authority of the Rational Consciousness was due then, in the first place, to the excessive weariness of the average Englishmen after a period of religious strife and bigotry.

(2) It was also a by-product of the rise of industrialism, which is the second outstanding feature of the eighteenth century. A rapid growth of wealth accompanied the increasing industrial activities of the country. Economic developments prevented large numbers of people from coming under any religious

¹ See Rufus Jones, *Spiritual Reformers of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, chap. xvii.

² See p. 9.

influence whatever. "Luxury created necessities and drove the lower ranks into the most abandoned wickedness"; so wrote a contemporary man of letters, Horace Walpole.¹ Kings, courtiers, and statesmen lived in defiance of the laws of morality as openly as in the days of the second Charles.² By the conclusion of the premiership of Sir Robert Walpole this tide of religious indifferentism may be said to have conquered the Church of England itself, partly as a result of the suppression of Convocation and, in a measure at least, as a result of the way in which the Crown patronage was administered.³

(3) The third and most important feature of the century was the amazing accumulation of new knowledge of all kinds. "It was no longer possible to live in a religious world limited by the horizon of Western Europe. Travellers were bringing home from recently discovered or rediscovered countries, reports of imposing civilisations, in which the sanctions of civil order were provided by religions of the utmost diversity in origin and character."⁴ But the

¹ *Memoirs of the Reign of King George II*, vol. i, p. 44. Quoted by Abbey and Overton, *The English Church in the Eighteenth Century*.

² *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 44.

³ Some writers assert that ecclesiastical patronage was never administered better than during this period (*e.g.* Mark Pattison in *Essays and Reviews*, p. 319). The true fact of the case is that generally speaking patronage was confined to the Whig clergy, though Bishop Gibson, in his capacity of adviser to Walpole, kept in mind the religious qualifications of those who received preferment.

⁴ G. C. Joyce, article on "Deism" in Hastings' *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. iv, p. 533. The beginnings of a science of religion may consequently be dated from this time.

discoveries which enlarged men's ideas of the world on which they lived dwindled to nothing by the side of the discoveries which wrenched the earth itself away from the hub of the universe and hurled it into infinity with a million other insignificant planets. Of course much of this knowledge was really not new, but it seems to have been latent and its import but little realised save by a very limited section of the nation. It will be well briefly to indicate the line of progress in science and philosophy which had proceeded apace since the fifteenth century and was now being precipitated in the eighteenth century in popular form.¹

Nicolas Copernicus (1473-1543) took the first step by demonstrating mathematically that the earth moves round the sun in a small orbit, and thus enormously extended the traditional notions of the size of the universe.² The importance of mathematics was stressed by succeeding investigators, and Leonardo da Vinci proclaimed it to be the ideal science.³ The net result of all this was that the universe was now

¹ The following remarks are largely indebted to lectures by the Rev. J. C. Hardwick, M.A., Chaplain of Ripon Hall, Oxford.

² Cardinal Nicolas of Cusa (c. 1450), Neoplatonist and anti-Aristotelian, prepared the way for this by his ideas of unlimited space. The circumference of the universe, he said, was nowhere, its centre everywhere.

³ Newton for example, attracted by its mysterious numbers, wrote a commentary on the *Apocalypse*, in which he proved to his satisfaction that they constitute a key to history, which shows that he was really quite "unconscious of the bearing of his discoveries on the traditional theology" (see Sir Leslie Stephen, *English Thought in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. i, p. 82).

being conceived as automatic. The Law of Inertia was worked out by Kepler and Galileo,¹ and on their data Newton constructed a completely mechanistic scheme of the universe. The sphere of inorganic nature having been captured in this way, mechanistic ideas were now applied to the sphere of organic nature. Descartes (who may be said to be the founder of modern psychology, neurology, and physiology), in bringing these sciences under mathematical and mechanistic control, excluded only man from their scope. The process was complete when Hobbes chained ethics and sociology to the same triumphal car.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, efforts to throw off this yoke had been made principally by Spinoza, Leibnitz, and Pascal—Spinoza by a doctrine of pure immanence,² Leibnitz by an attempt to interpret the universe in terms of individual personality,³ Pascal by separating science and theology. But discoveries in chemistry, physics and psychology still proceeded throughout the eighteenth century, so that scientists were enabled to elaborate Newton's scheme still further and to explain the universe to their satisfaction more and more in terms of naturalism, mechanism and materialism. Man himself came to be regarded as "merely a bundle of cunningly con-

¹ Kepler showed that a body cannot move from rest to motion, and Galileo demonstrated the converse.

² Coleridge says, speaking of Spinoza, that whereas for the Christian the world minus God=O, but God minus the world=God, for Spinoza God minus the world=O (quoted by W. R. Inge, *Outspoken Essays*, Second Series, p. 11).

³ Leibnitz conceives of Force as concentrated in centres, or atoms, which he calls monads, all of which exist in their own right and possess varying grades of consciousness.

trived mechanisms bound up together and mechanically connected.”¹ The direction in which all this tended is plainly to be seen in the famous reply of Laplace to Napoleon’s question concerning the place of God in his philosophical system—“I have no need of that hypothesis.” It would be a mistake to suppose that these words necessarily betrayed an attitude to life which took no account of religion: they refer simply to the conception of an “absentee God” which follows naturally from belief in a mechanical world and a transcendent Deity. The study of this mechanical world became the primary religious, as well as scientific, interest of the period.

The religion of the eighteenth century is usually referred to as natural religion,² and a definite contrast is hereby implied to what is called revealed religion. This was the change which now came over religious thought, and it was a development which was inevitable with the advancement of scientific knowledge, once given the separation between natural and revealed religion which had first been made by Thomas Aquinas in the interests of revealed religion, and by Francis Bacon and René Descartes in the interests of the new science and philosophy.³ Out of this antithesis between so-called natural religion and so-called

¹ La Mettrie, *L’Homme Machine*.

² The designation “religion of nature” is reserved by way of distinction, for the immanent religion of the school of Wordsworth. See pp. 98, 132.

³ Bishop Gibson wrote to Bishop Berkeley in 1736 that “the men of science (a conceited generation) are the greatest sticklers against revealed religion, and have been very open in their attacks upon it” (Fraser, *Works of Berkeley*, iv, p. 238).

revealed religion sprang the religious controversies of the first half of the century. But before passing to the study of these, it will be well to summarise the general conclusions to be drawn from the change of emphasis.

(a) The arbitrary, tyrannical God of Calvinism gave place to a God who was of necessity beneficent, since nature was not yet thought of as "red in tooth and claw," and the universe was observed to be so perfect in its mechanism that it might no longer be accused of the freakishness with which miracle-mongering had characterised it in the Middle Ages. The Fatherhood of God was stressed as never before in Western theology, but this was quickly interpreted to mean that God was good-natured, and the consequent removal of stress on His wrath led at once to depreciation in the value of personal faith and dependence upon Him. This was most marked among the Deists.

(b) Since this world was regarded, in Leibnitz's phrase, as the best of all possible worlds, it became difficult to see why it was necessary to superimpose a scheme of salvation. The great themes of Christianity, the Incarnation and the Atonement, would have been quietly dropped by the orthodox had there been no external attacks on Christianity which made the reiteration of their revelation to man seem essential. Curiously enough the Arian conception of Christ, which came to Milton as a result of his belief in God as Absolute Will, became more widespread under the influence of the new ideas. Christ was no longer thought of as subordinate to the Father because the Father *sent* Him, but because there was neither necessity nor room for a complete revealer of God

in a world which was already made perfect.¹ In consequence of all this, the doctrine of the Trinity likewise became suspect, so that even the orthodox held to it somewhat uneasily, and would gladly have left all doctrinal issues aside in their preference for practical religion and the enunciation of moral precepts. The morality religion of the eighteenth century became so popular that children were even baptised with the name "Morality."²

(c) Closely connected with the emphasis on morality, a new interest in man for his own sake followed from the all-absorbing study of nature. Mention has already been made of the final relegation of man to automatism, but the popular interest in man at first took the form of elevating the savage to a false position of moral superiority, although his intellectual inferiority—his "untutored mind" as Pope puts it—was recognised. There was also a tendency to attribute the evils of existing society to the corruptions of an artificial civilisation and the inventions of a designing priesthood.³ The whole duty of man was conceived

¹ Newton's sentiments seem to have been Arian as were also those of Whiston. Samuel Clarke, in his *Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity* (1712), showed leanings towards Arianism, while even Locke and Waterland held a conception of Christ which was really more Arian than Nicene.

² Favourite seventeenth-century names, such as Faith, Mercy, Hope, suggest an interesting comparison between the popular religion of the two centuries.

³ *E.g.* Animal sacrifice was regarded as an invention of priests for securing a regular supply of roast and boiled for their own consumption. Mystery and persecution was the method for preserving clerical authority. The Deist, Woolston, was transported at the idea of "the extinction of ecclesiastical vermin out of God's house," and the consequent return of the world to its "paradisaical state of nature, religion, and liberty.

as the practical function of fulfilling a set task in the world's mechanism—namely the reasonable performance of “good works” in imitation of God's own beneficence.¹ Religion was not united to morality : it was identified with it.

II

THE HIGH CHURCH PARTY AND THE NON-JURORS

These three outstanding features of the eighteenth century combined to bring in an era of non-mystical rationalism. Religious emotion, as a stimulant of reason and conscience was frowned upon : the growth of industrialism seduced the country to practical materialism, and the discoveries of science fettered men's minds by the idea of a universal mechanical and static uniformity.

The unimaginative rationalism of the eighteenth century was manifested in three departments of English religious thought, in a sphere outside of organised Christianity altogether, in Nonconformity, and in the Church of England itself. The decline of the High Church party, which had been predominant at the Restoration in 1660, forms the prelude to the study of these activities : it may be said to have been accomplished by the accession of George II in 1727, and with it the Church ceased from all internal strife of any magnitude, while its practical and parochial work suffered by reason of its exclusive devotion to external controversy. Following this, Sir Robert Walpole, in his anxious endeavour to keep ecclesiastical

¹ The Roman Church anticipated this by outstanding works of charity in the first half of the seventeenth century.

controversy quiet and to deprive the Jacobite clergy of authority and influence, robbed the Church of all corporate initiative, corporate action, and corporate utterance.¹ Nevertheless this state of affairs would not have arisen if the Church had not been greatly weakened between the Restoration in 1660 and the Act of Uniformity of 1662, during which time the restored royalist Arminians² excluded some two thousand Presbyterian Calvinists from their communion; and if its vigour had not been further drained in 1690 by the secession of some four hundred Non-juring clergy, many of them eminent for piety and learning, and four bishops, Ken, Turner, Lake and White, together with the Primate Sancroft, who chose to be deprived rather than take the oath of allegiance to William of Orange. It is a curious fact that the Church of England should have been so reduced in its membership during the period which not only began with a scheme for comprehension but which held up before it the same ideal throughout. When it was said by a writer³ of the year 1659 that already "moderation was growne in fashion," it is surprising to find that religious toleration was still little more than an ideal until after the death of Anne in 1714.⁴ It was the policy of a few outstanding men like Stillingfleet, Burnet and Tillotson,

¹ Walpole, however, was not responsible for the actual suppression of Convocation which took place in 1717.

² See p. 49.

³ Adam Martindale in his *Autobiography*.

⁴ Dissenting worship was allowed by the *Declaration of Indulgence* in 1672 and organised Dissent apart from the Church may be dated from 1689.

and these, especially the last named, were able to popularise their ideal to some extent among the laity by their preaching, but the mass of the clergy were the descendants of the Laudians, and had suffered too much to forgive readily or unite with the Presbyterians.

Though they were the dominant party at the Restoration—perhaps *because* they were dominant and had not to fight for the ideals of their ancestors—this new order of High Church men could not avert the prevalent religious disaffection, nor themselves escape its influence, especially when they cut themselves off from the life of the national Church. There was a steady declension from the standard of Laudianism which culminated in the coarser High-Churchmanship of Queen Anne's time. "When in quick succession Bull and Beveridge, Ken and Nelson passed away, there were no new men who could exactly supply their places,"¹ although in numbers there was no lack of High Churchmen throughout the century. But apart from the fact that the High Churchmen shared in the general moral and spiritual depression, their declining influence was due to another reason, the narrowing down of the original scope of Laudianism—a process which has not yet ceased.²

It has been seen³ that English Catholicism is in the very nature of its constitution a liberal Catholicism, and that when this liberal element is

¹ Cf. Abbey and Overton, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 135; Robert Nelson: *His Friends and Church Principles*.

² See pp. 179 f.

³ P. 50.

excluded from it a tendency to sectarianism inevitably sets in. Examining in more detail the situation in the Church of England at the end of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth century, the causes for the decline of the High Church party may be summarised as follows, each one being closely connected with the decline of the liberal element in English Catholicism.

First, the historical alliance between Laudianism and the hereditary monarchy had proved disastrous to both Church and Throne. Moreover, in view of the changed situation which was effected by the Revolution of 1688, the alliance now became impossible, for the King was a Calvinistic Presbyterian and occupied the throne by virtue of excluding the natural heir. This situation led to friction within the High Church party itself, and there was a good deal of bitterness between those Nonjurors, who were Jacobites, and those who remained in the Church and exalted their expedient doctrine of passive obedience and non-resistance to the position of a "Doctrine of the Cross."¹ The eighteenth century was marked throughout by alliances between Church and political parties, and the High Church party took the wrong political turning every time.

Secondly, even the best of the High Churchmen ceased to be students of the Reformation. Bishop Ken's library, for example, says Canon E. W. Watson,²

¹ *Life of Kettlewell*, p. 87. Quoted by Abbey and Overton, vol. i, p. 139.

² Lectures on The Eighteenth Century, at Christ Church, Oxford.

contained no writings of the Reformers, but much mystical and Roman Catholic devotional literature. An extract from his Will reads as follows: "As for my religion, I dye in the holy catholic and apostolic faith professed by the whole Church before the disunion of East and West, more particularly in the communion of the Church of England, as it stands distinguished from all Papal and Puritan innovations, and as it adheres to the doctrine of the Cross."¹ Beautiful as this is, it is not the virile liberalism of William Laud,² which displayed clearly the rational spirit that lies at the root of "the Protestant religion by law established in England."

Thirdly, the High Churchmen failed to adjust themselves to the growing indifference towards religious dogmatism. Their own high authoritarian ideas were bankrupt of meaning for the new age,³ failing entirely to satisfy the growing tendency to seek an internal, instead of an external, religious authority. Their failure in this respect, then as now, was mainly due to an obstinate refusal to take account of the new knowledge and its bearings on the old faith.

¹ W. L. Bowles, *Life of Bishop Ken*, vol. ii, p. 308.

² See pp. 50 f. Also Dean Hook, *Lives of the Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vi, pp. 360-93.

³ The first great centre of natural science in England was established as early as 1663, in the reign of Charles II, in the tower of Wadham College, Oxford. This formed the nucleus of the Royal Society, whose motto *Nullius addictus (jurare in verba magistri)* is a direct defiance, points out Dr. E. W. Watson, of the old principle of Authority.

III

THE PHILOSOPHY OF JOHN LOCKE

The rationalistic reaction against the claims both of external authority and of the Mystical Consciousness received extreme expression in three quarters—in what is called Deism, in Presbyterianism, and in the newer Latitudinarianism of the Church of England. To the discussion of these, it is necessary to prefix a short account of the sceptical philosophy of John Locke, for as one has said he is “the intellectual symbol of the age of the Revolution.”¹ Three points in his system require to be noted.

(a) To his own question, “Whence has the mind all the materials of reason and knowledge?” he answered: “From experience.” From experience he excluded the “established principle . . . that there are in the understanding certain innate principles, some primary notions, κοινὰ ἔννοιαι, characters, as it were stamped upon the mind of man, which the soul receives in its very first being, and brings into the world with it.”² Experience, for Locke, could only be mediated by sensation and reflection, and these, he says, “contain all our whole stock of ideas.”³

(b) There need be no complaint as to the limitations of our knowledge, or the “narrowness of our minds,

¹ The “sensationalism” and individualism of his *Essay concerning Human Understanding* dominated the thinking of the eighteenth century.

² Book I, chap. ii, sect. 1. (Quoted by A. K. Rogers, *A Student's History of Philosophy*.)

³ Book II, chap. xi, p. 17.

if we will but employ them about what may be of use to us. . . . The candle that is set up in us shines bright enough for all our purposes.”¹ By this sense of right and truth within, Locke maintained that all external evidences must be judged² and by such a criterion he found that Christianity was “reasonable.”

(c) The rationalism of Locke made him sceptical of “any direct communication between the human soul and God”: yet the rigid tests which he applied to the Scriptures left him convinced that a divine revelation had there been made, a conclusion from which he was unwilling to escape, being “profoundly conscious of the immense importance of a positive sanction to human motives and hopes” and aware of the religious weakness of his own system. He thus recognised that Scripture constituted a divine limit to the supremacy of reason, and as a result of his “sense-philosophy,” inferred that the unimpeachable evidence for Christ’s miracles guaranteed that this limitation was itself a reasonable one.³ “In his book on the *Reasonableness of Christianity*, published in 1695, he maintained that Christianity might be reduced to a single tenet, that Christ was Messiah, whose advent was foretold by prophets, the truth of

¹ Book I, chap. i, pp. 5, 6.

² J. J. Tayler, *op. cit.*, pp. 235 f., 269 f.

³ In his first letter to Stillingfleet he says, “I shall always hearken to Scripture, as containing infallible truth, relating to things of the highest concernment; and I wish I could say there were no mysteries in it; I acknowledge there are to me, and I fear always will be” (quoted by J. J. Tayler, *ibid.*, p. 268).

whose divine mission has been attested by miracles. Beyond that position the orthodox theology of the eighteenth century did not go.”¹

If Locke however held to all three of these divisions in his philosophy, many who followed him and claimed him as their master lacked his patience and comprehensive spirit, and became negligent of one or more of them. The second division was exalted and carried to its logical conclusion especially by the Deists.

IV

RATIONAL THOUGHT OUTSIDE THE CHURCH—THE
DEISTS

Considerable difficulty is felt in attempting to classify or systematise the ideas of the various Deists. This is due to three causes. First, as Hunt says,² “through all the history of the Deist controversy, we shall find the Deists and the Christian advocates continually changing places, as to the grounds of attack and defence.” Secondly, the Deists were supreme individualists, without belief in, or any desire for, organisation. Their ideas were not without considerable influence on their own and succeeding generations, yet they lost immeasurably in force and consistency by lack of a principle of loyalty to any institution. Thirdly, it appears to be the custom for writers on Deism to classify Lord Herbert of

¹ A. V. G. Allen, *The Continuity of Christian Thought*, p. 353.

² *Religious Thought in England*, vol. iii, p. 379.

Cherbury as the first Deist, and then to indicate that the Deists were dependent upon Locke, whereas the philosophy of Lord Herbert was widely different from that of Locke. It seems possible, however, to divide the Deists into two schools which overlap each other in time.

The first school agreed with Locke in maintaining the reasonableness of Christianity, but disagreed with him particularly on the principle of innate ideas, maintaining that in every human mind were implanted by nature certain notions of religion and morality. The connection of Deism with Lord Herbert, the contemporary of Lord Falkland, now becomes plain, for it was he who had first set forth the principle of innate ideas of practical religion and morality,¹ a conclusion which received philosophical vindication from the Cambridge Platonists (especially Cudworth).² The Deists who may be classed in this first school are Lord Herbert, Blount, Toland, Tindal, Morgan, and Chubb. To these Lord Shaftesbury may also be added tentatively, though he himself repudiated the name of Deist.³

The second school of Deists agreed with Locke in refusing to allow the existence of innate ideas, but disagreed with him, first by rejecting the miraculous and then by rejecting Christianity altogether as a

¹ In his *De Veritate prout distinguitur a revelatione, a verisimili, a possibili et a falso*.

² Cf. A. K. Rogers, *A Student's History of Philosophy*, p. 392.

³ Hunt, vol. ii, p. 342. Shaftesbury's relations to Deism consist mainly in his strong belief in an intuitive moral faculty in human nature. He strongly opposed his teacher, Locke.

religion neither in accordance with the principles of reason nor of nature. The Deists who may be assigned to this school are Collins and Woolston, and to these may be added tentatively Lord Bolingbroke, just as Lord Shaftesbury was added to the first school.¹ The writings of these two last show clearly that Deism was a philosophical rather than a religious movement, and the conclusions which they both necessarily drew from their philosophies expose for us the fatal lack in the premises of Deism generally.²

Deism represents a philosophical attempt to arrive at wide and simple generalisations on religion and morality such as had already been achieved in the sphere of natural science. The Deists were impatient of the claims of revealed religion and anxious—at least at first—that Christianity should be simplified and synthetised with the recent greatly increased knowledge of the world. As there were two main schools of Deists so likewise there were two main themes in the Deist controversy—revelation and miracle respectively. Moreover each of these theories involves another. Closely connected with the subject of revelation was the question of the relation of the Rational Consciousness to the Moral Consciousness:³

¹ Bolingbroke's "five pompous volumes" were posthumous. Like many Free-thinkers he professed to be a Christian, but disliked St. Paul, thus foreshadowing the modern Liberal Protestant dilemma, *Jesus or Paul*. Otherwise, he was a follower of Locke's sense-philosophy, though his views were impulsive and chaotic, *e.g.* he speaks of "a law of duty founded in human nature, and clearly and sufficiently discoverable by reason," which seems very much like belief in "innate ideas."

² See p. 105.

³ See the discussion of this on pp. 7 f.

the discussion of miracles involved the beginnings of literary and historical criticism of the Bible.

It should be borne in mind that there was considerable misunderstanding of the Deists by the Christian Apologists. Thus the first of the questions raised, namely, the necessity and truth of revelation, was not the logical outcome of the book which commenced the Deist controversy proper in 1696, Toland's *Christianity not Mysteriorious*. The conclusion to be drawn from this book is that of the German *Illuminati*, who applied the principle "that the Moral Consciousness of man is divinely inspired, to any department of human thought or interest, whether education or society, literature or art."¹ Toland however was accused of denying the Christian revelation of God. In the clamour which filled the succeeding years the issue is seen to be the sufficiency, or otherwise, of the natural reason to establish and enforce morality. The Deists maintained that it was sufficient, but generally admitted that the special use of revelation was to confirm what they knew already by reason. Further than this they would not go, and their argument was stated roundly and finally in 1730 by Tindal in his book *Christianity as Old as the Creation*,² which claims that Christianity and the ideal religion of nature are one and the same; if any discrepancy is found between them, this is due to the illegitimate insertion into Christianity of some theological dogmas

¹ See Allen, pp. 348 f. This, of course, obviously goes hand in hand with a belief in innate ideas. Toland called himself a "Pantheist," and was apparently the first to use this word.

² The alternative title of this book was *The Gospel a Republication of the Religion of Nature*.

of which "the common mind of humanity knows nothing." The Apologists on the other hand, while agreeing that revelation should confirm the dictates of this "common mind," or natural reason, argued that it contained some things not discoverable by unaided reason, yet not contrary to reason, the neglect of which might have serious consequences to man's future well-being. This line of defence against Deism found its champion in Bishop Butler, whose famous *Analogy*, written in 1736, entirely cut away the ground from under the feet of the first school of Deists. The object of this book was not to prove absolutely that there had been a divine revelation; the author was himself far too much under the influence of eighteenth-century rationalism to contemplate such a task. He desired simply to show that as great objections lie against natural religion as against revealed religion, and then went on to argue, from analogies of cause and effect in the physical world, that there was a fair probability of the existence of a similar moral law which might conceivably work out its results in a future life. At this point Butler became inconsistent and proceeded to defend some "precepts in the Scriptures which seem to be immoral" on the grounds that if we knew all the reasons why they are commanded they would be found not to be immoral.¹ In his other thesis however Butler was sound, and by exposing the weaknesses of natural religion he dealt the death-blow to Deism.²

¹ Hunt, vol. iii, p. 393. See p. 104, for a fuller discussion of this.

² The other classical works against Deism were Warburton's

The second and later school of Deists shows up the weakness of Deism in its lack of organisation, for this defect enabled the Apologists to side track them from their characteristic arguments concerning immutable laws executing themselves on the disobedient, and to turn their attention to the side issues of prophecy and miracle. This school exhibited generally a different temper from that of the first school, and if it had no direct precursors among seventeenth-century writers as the first school had, yet it exemplified a tendency whose *terminus a quo* is to be found as far back as Bacon's essay on *Superstition*,¹ which expresses a preference for atheism over superstition. Collins however was apparently a man of high character and held in great esteem. His contention was that prophecies had only relation to their contemporary events and that the fulfilment of Old Testament predictions concerning Christ could only be taken in a mystical and allegorical sense. This line of thought he worked out in his *Discourse of the Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion*, published in 1724. In the succeeding years 1727-30, the blasphemous writer Woolston proceeded likewise to allegorise the Bible miracles, acutely and wisely pointing out that "the significance of miracles lay in the moral or spiritual truth they were designed to convey."² The problems raised by these two men resolved themselves eventually into two questions :

Divine Legation of Moses, Berkeley's *Alciphron*, or the *Minute Philosopher*, and Leland's *View of the Deistical Writers*.

¹ No. XVII.

² A. V. G. Allen, p. 354.

Is the fulfilment of prophecy a fact or a fable? Is the Resurrection of Christ a fact or a fraud? The excesses of insolence and irreverence into which some of the Deist writers of this second school allowed themselves to fall ensured for their opponents, the Christian-evidence writers, an easy victory. The points discussed during these years opened the great controversy, from the shadow of which theology has not yet escaped, as to the genuineness and authenticity of the books of Scripture, though the deeper principles of historical criticism were not then apprehended.

Shaftesbury's philosophy rendered the existence of God of comparatively little moment and so paved the way for what Pringle-Pattison calls the attenuated theism of Hume: the philosophy of Bolingbroke leaned towards a selfish materialism, a downward transition which received fuller expression first in Voltaire and then in Diderot, when Deism on its way to Germany¹ had corrupted the spiritual life of France.² The appearance of Bolingbroke's volumes in 1754 may be said finally to mark the end of the English school of Freethinking, or Deism. The middle of the eighteenth century found Great Britain wrapped in a wave of gloom, the result of a reaction from the flippant optimism which followed the first popularising of scientific knowledge.³ Butler's *Analogy* must have

¹ Cf. p. 112, and see J. F. Hurst, *History of Rationalism*, p. 99.

² G. C. Joyce, article on "Deism" in *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. iv, p. 539.

³ A number of "graveyard" poems reflect a great fear of death, which was intensified by the Lisbon earthquake in 1755—Young's *Night Thoughts* (completed 1744), Blair's

contributed materially to this in directing attention to a more careful study of the darker side of nature.

The conclusion to be drawn from all this is one that has already been mentioned, that the line between the fundamental positions of unorthodox Deist and orthodox Apologist was very ill-defined : the Apologists themselves had nothing adequate to offer when it was found that natural religion could not satisfy the spiritual hunger of man. "After so many centuries of Christian training it had become a matter of uncertainty as to what Christianity really was."¹ It remains to discuss some outstanding points arising out of the controversy in the light of the fuller knowledge of to-day.

The eighteenth century was essentially an age

Grave (1743), Gray's *Elegy* (1750)—to which may be added Hervey's (prose) *Meditations among the Tombs* (1746). The following extracts from the first of these writings illustrate the decay of belief in a beneficent ordering of the universe and in human immortality :—

"A part how small of the terraqueous globe
Is tenanted by man ! the rest a *waste*,
Rocks, deserts, frozen seas, and burning sands :
Wild haunts of monsters, poisons, stings, and death.
Such is earth's melancholy map ! but, far
More sad ! this earth is a true map of *man*.

Of man's miraculous mistakes, this bears
The palm, ' That all men are about to live.'

How excellent that life they ne'er will lead ! "

¹ A. V. G. Allen, p. 361.

of the accumulation of knowledge: an immense amount of data was collected which could not then be properly classified and interpreted. The greater Apologists of that age, in defending an old view of revelation, made use of arguments which really looked forward, as F. D. Maurice says speaking of Bishop Butler, to circumstances and conditions which had not yet come into existence. Not having grasped the true bearings of the new knowledge they tried to weld incompatibles; nevertheless they managed in consequence to preserve more of the values in traditional Christianity than was possible to the rigid and impatient rationalism of the Deists. The theology of the eighteenth century seems inconsequent at the following points.

(1) The mediæval ontological idea of God was not transformed, but only modified, by the discoveries of science. It remained for the nineteenth century to give effect to the new psychological idea of God which had been foreshadowed by the Cambridge Platonists, who, lacking the data now supplied by natural science, had been unable to win for it any wide acceptance.¹ Both Deists and orthodox Apologists believed in a purely transcendent God, the difference being that the latter maintained that prophecy and miracle proved His existence, while the former apparently compensated for the absence of these by belief in the existence of innate ideas of goodness in the human soul. Both sides maintained that Christianity was a republication of natural

¹ See pp. 66 f, 73, 80 f.

religion, but the Deist belief, which bears some resemblance to the Logos doctrine, was more in harmony with the nineteenth-century "religion of nature."¹ "Natural religion," in the eyes of contemporary orthodoxy, looked with admiration on the world as a kind of magnificent box of cunningly devised toys, and applauded in retrospect the unexpected interventions of the Designer. An absentee God, or an exclusively transcendent God, is quite incompatible with a poetic and penetrating interest in nature, but the Apologists, with their artificial and almost inverted interest, were unable to glimpse any inconsequence, being enthralled by the sense-philosophy of Locke which caused them to regard miracles as the reasonable credentials of revelation. The same philosophy affected the Deists differently. They did not look to miracles for proof of moral and theological truth: this they found in the experience of certain actions, as well of course as in the reason of man. To the modern mind, it seems that in this contention the Deists were right rather than the Apologists, though neither could see the solution which presents itself to us. This is that there is indeed a "reign of law" in nature which is observed to be uniformly free from suspension or intervention, but that God Himself is immanent in His universe, acting through the laws which govern it, and from time to time revealing new laws to man. Thus already the world knows

¹ See pp. 79, 132. An excellent idea of the eighteenth-century admiration of nature is to be gained from needle-work samplers and the neat way in which gardens were set out.

of three sets of laws—mechanical, biological, and psychological—and creation still goes on.¹

The perception of this to-day has resulted in the drawing of a distinction between the supernatural and the miraculous, which is the first step towards abolishing the remaining distinction between the supernatural and the natural. "Traditional theology in opposing the supernatural to the natural has constantly fallen into the snare of identifying the supernatural either with the abnormal or with the artificial. . . . It ignores the fact that a relation of communion between men and God, in so far as it is realised, must supersede a relation of intervention. . . . If God once for all intervened through Jesus Christ to set up such a communion and fellowship, His continued Presence in it cannot be characteristically manifested in a further series of interventions."² But before this could become at all clear it was necessary that the revolt of Kant and Coleridge against dogma should leave its mark on English theological thought, and that there should be a greater reaction than occurred during the eighteenth century against the theory of the immutability of species put forward by the botanist Linnæus between the years 1731 and 1753. By reason of the lack of knowledge of the evolutionary process, the static notions of history and anthropology

¹ See H. D. A. Major, Introduction to the *Modern Churchman*, October, 1922. Cf. also J. S. Haldane, quoted on p. 150 of this book.

² O. C. Quick, *Liberalism, Modernism and Tradition* (Bishop Paddock Lectures, 1922), pp. 72 ff. See also Von Hügel, *Essays and Addresses in the Philosophy of Religion*, No. xi.

which obtain in Milton's *Paradise Lost* still persisted, and so misled men into the ludicrous notion of a golden age in the garden of Eden that even Aristotle could be called, in Doctor South's phrase, "the rubbish of an Adam."

Lastly, with regard to the controversy over innate ideas, neither Locke nor the Deists were entirely in the right. Innate ideas indeed do not exist, but in their place we now know there are "*inherent tendencies*, some common to the race, some peculiar to individuals, and giving birth to all the varieties of genius and character, which control the associations and determine the conclusions of the mind, independent of external influence, and on some subjects yield a higher kind of certainty than is attainable by logical deduction from the simple facts of experience." ¹

(2) The distinction which the eighteenth century made between natural and revealed religion does not now seem to be valid. "All religion viewed from the scientific standpoint is *natural*: all religion viewed from the standpoint of a personal and self-communicating God is *revealed*. A change in our view of the *method* of Divine Revelation to humanity is really the cause of the disappearance for us of the old distinction between *natural* and *revealed*." ² There is of course an almost immeasurable difference, for example, between Christianity and primitive animism, but the great religions, or as the late Professor Alan Menzies called them, the "founded religions," differ only in

¹ J. J. Tayler, p. 234.

² H. D. A. Major, *Modern Churchman*, October, 1922.

the degree of Divine Revelation which each possesses. Two points required careful consideration.¹

The first is that there have been revelations of the transcendent God in a sense which may be called *objective*. "From this point of view, Revelation is regarded as a history of God's successive gifts *ab extra* to man whom He created. . . . First individuals, then a family, then a nation, and then a Church, are the divinely selected channels and depositaries of God's revelation to man in the past. That revelation reached its climax, if not its completion, in the manifestation of God in Christ."² Inspiration in this sense, working through the chosen few, calls the human race to a fuller appropriation of life. This in the main is mediated through institutions and books, but the constitution of the one and the compilation of the other obviously can never be free from an admixture of a spirit of lower value than that of the original prophet.

The second point is that the aim of the universe is to deepen, and extend the range of, self-consciousness: that mankind as a whole is becoming more rational and spiritual: that there is an evolution of divine life in the human race. The indwelling God, the Spirit "groaning" in creation, is becoming more and more externalised in man.³ The revelation or

¹ See p. 66. The subject of revelation is most intimately bound up with the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

² J. M. Wilson, "The Idea of Revelation, in the Light of Modern Knowledge and Research" (article in the *Cambridge Theological Essays*, pp. 205, 249).

³ See the essay on "Transcendence and Immanence" (p. 17) by Pringle-Pattison, in *The Spirit*, ed. by B. H. Streeter.

"revealing of the Sons of God,"¹ is in this aspect a *subjective* process.

These two apparently conflicting points of view are entirely consistent. Evolution is for more life, and Revelation in its objective sense, is likewise for more life.² If growth may not be static neither may revelation. "Eternal Life," says the Dean of St. Paul's, "is *progressive* knowledge of God."³ In like manner, the constitutions, traditions, beliefs, habits, and systems which enshrine a revelation are all in a state of flux,⁴ and vitality must be liberated from these from time to time by the use of the Rational and Spiritual Consciousness in distinguishing the divine and permanent elements in them from those which are purely human and transient. To deprive the Church and the Bible of a fixed revelation is therefore to subject them to a rational and moral discipline which keeps them alert and active. To make Christianity the progressive realisation of ideals which had their perfect consummation in Christ is to establish, and in no wise to detract from, its authority as the absolute religion.⁵

Also J. A. Thomson in *The System of Animate Nature*, vol. ii, especially chapters xvi and xvii, where "the inherent rationality of Nature, the Logos" is shown to have "become articulate," and, moreover, to have found "joyous appreciation" in man.

¹ Rom. viii, 19.

² Cf. W. R. Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, p. 24.

³ *Cambridge Biblical Essays*, p. 272 (*italics mine*).

⁴ Cf. W. A. Brown, *The Essence of Christianity*, pp. 126 f.

⁵ P. 14. Newman realised something of this when he wrote his *Essay on the Development of Doctrine*, and the fifth chapter of his *Apologia* where he distinguishes between the doctrine which is stationary and the definition which

(3) The underlying cause of the Deist controversy is a subtle one, but one which is fundamental to the thesis of this book. The Deists were really attacking a system of doctrine which was not built firmly upon the Rational Consciousness or the Moral Consciousness.¹ It has been seen ² that all the basic religious authorities were admitted in the Reformation Settlement of the Church of England in the following order—the Bible, the Church, the Rational, Moral, and Spiritual Consciousness, the two first being explicitly recognised, and the last being only imperfectly understood. The history of religious thought in the English Church has been in some measure the history of the reversal of this order. This is observable in the thought of the Cambridge Platonists. They were the first clearly to apprehend the principle that the foundation of religion lies in the Moral Consciousness, an assertion which was “a silent challenge to the Augustinian doctrine of original sin,” ³ with its dreadful implication of the total depravity of human nature. It now becomes clear that while the human mind was thought of as fundamentally diseased, an external revelation of God, in itself a complete mystery, was the only view of revelation possible. In the eighteenth century “the result of its rejection is more manifest than is the application to theology of the principle which supplanted it.”⁴

is changing. It is this presumably which makes the Roman Catholic Modernists claim Newman as their father. See W. A. Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 127 n.

¹ Cf. A. V. G. Allen, *op. cit.*, pp. 361 f.

² Chap. iii, section iv.

³ A. V. G. Allen, *op. cit.*, pp. 361 f.

⁴ *Ibid.*

Here lies the weakness of Butler's *Analogy* (already referred to) ¹ when he proceeds to defend some "precepts in the Scriptures which seem to be immoral" on the ground that if we knew all the reasons why they are commanded they would be found not to be immoral. If Butler was right "it is useless," as Hunt points out, "to speak of our having a moral sense," or to act out of an instinctive conviction of the validity of the judgments of conscience.² Butler himself, being a moralist like all the great theologians of the eighteenth century, probably recognised his dilemma, yet in spite of the inconsistency which he showed he did far more for the cause of religion than the Deists who adhered strictly to the correct principle of rejecting all that violated the Rational Consciousness. This is not to assert that error is more potent for good than truth, for the Deists (as indeed the Apologists too) were deficient in their conception of the nature of reason. Reason, in the eighteenth century, was identified with the mere understanding, and not with the "logic of the whole personality," rational, moral, and spiritual. The eighteenth century failed to recognise the superiority of other ways, besides that of the mere critical or logical understanding, of getting into contact with the highest experience. Some attributes of Divine Being are certainly amenable to natural reason, but some are only known in religious experience of a higher order.³ Without this living

¹ P. 93.

² Butler's argument, for example, was seized upon by Newman to justify the worship of the Virgin and the cultus of Saints.

³ Dr. L. P. Jacks, *Lectures on the Problem of Evil*.

spiritual experience the reason of man is reduced and de-vitalised. In their writings, neither Deists nor Apologists show any knowledge of a vital religious experience within the soul, whereas it is in the soul, to use Pascal's pregnant phrase, that things happen. Without the binding precepts of external revelation, therefore, the tendency of Deism soon became manifest : natural law which could only be said to operate for the *general* well-being after the dark side of nature had been exposed, involved the sacrifice of the individual : removal of stress on the infinite worth of the individual depreciated the value of personal faith, personal prayer, and personal immortality—and even rendered indifferent, as in Shaftesbury's case, the problem of the existence of a personal God.¹

V

RATIONAL THOUGHT AMONG DISSENTERS—THE
UNITARIANS

Eighteenth-century rationalism, when manifested in Presbyterianism, became Unitarianism. The term Unitarian, though invented in the seventeenth century and used by the followers of John Biddle, did not become general till the middle of the eighteenth century, though it was used at the Assembly of Exeter divines as early as 1719.² The first independent

¹ See Allen, *op. cit.*, p. 352.

² This Assembly was convened by the presbyterian ministers at Exeter, two of their number having preached the Arian sentiments expressed by "the great Dr. Clarke" in the Trinitarian controversy. It led finally to a representative meeting of Baptists, Independents, and Presbyterians at Salters' Hall in the same year, and a resolution was passed

Unitarian meeting-house was opened in London in 1774 by an ex-Anglican, Theophilus Lindsey, and Unitarianism became firmly established as a separate religious communion in 1778, by which time "almost all the chapels belonging to the General Baptists and to the Presbyterians had been surrendered to Unitarian teaching."¹

The leading idea behind Unitarianism is a demand for the intellectual freedom of the Church, and the method by which it sought to attain that freedom was the abolition of all engagements which may fetter the free teaching of the clergy.² The conflict was a grim one between two naked irreconcilables neither of which would tolerate a mediator—ecclesiastical authority and rationalism. Its course in the eighteenth century falls into two sections, according as it was influenced or not influenced by Locke. The first Unitarians—if their genealogical tree *via* the older and younger Socinus, the Albigenses and Anabaptists, Abelard, Photinus, Arius, Paul of Samosata, and the Ebionites may be excluded—may be found in those who adopted an Arian view of Christ, first as a result of the Calvinistic idea of God as arbitrary will and absolute power, and then as a result of belief in this world's initial perfection.³

that the members of these communions should bind themselves by no form of creed whatever: "The Bible won by a majority of four."

¹ Curteis, *Bampton Lectures*, p. 297.

² Curteis, *op. cit.*, p. 285.

³ See p. 80 f. "There had always been a tendency among the old Puritans" (says F. Maurice in his *Life of F. D. Maurice*, p. 4) "to appeal especially to the God of the Old Testament.

John Biddle, however, in 1645, became the first Unitarian separatist, though the successor to his ideas, Thomas Firmin, never found it necessary to leave the Church's communion—an indication of how widespread this type of thought must have been. "When the Revolution was once settled, the Unitarian controversy broke out with great activity giving birth to an immense number of tracts on all sides, and continued to engage the attention of the theological world during the last ten years of the seventeenth century,"¹ most of the time being occupied by a violent Trinitarian warfare, which took its origin from the publication of *The Naked Gospel* by Dr. Bury in 1690.² The principal combatants in this literary struggle were Wallis, Savilian professor of Geometry in Oxford, who was a Sabellian; Sherlock, afterwards Dean of St. Paul's, who was a Tritheist; and South, the celebrated High Church wit, who seems to have grasped the doctrine of Thomas Aquinas that the three Persons are activities of One Mind. Other doctrines disputed were those of Satisfaction and Imputed Righteousness.

During the eighteenth century, as a result of the influence of Locke, Unitarianism gradually superseded Presbyterianism, so that the two words eventually were regarded as synonymous. "The Presbyterian theology of this period was the offspring of an alliance between the new philosophy of Locke and the

... These English Presbyterians, therefore, inherited a tendency to speak in an almost Mohammedan sense of a One God."

¹ J. J. Tayler, *op. cit.*, pp. 226 f.

² See J. Hunt, *Religious Thought in England*, vol. ii, pp. 195 ff.

Scripturalism of the old Puritans,"¹ and the strongholds of this new type of Christian rationalism were the Dissenting Academies,² which may be regarded as the precursors of modern theological seminaries in England. The revival of the Unitarian controversy in the latter part of the century, as a result of which Unitarians became a separate sect in 1778, was due to the simplification, popularisation and dogmatisation of Locke's philosophy by Dr. Hartley, who maintained that "all the materials of human knowledge, belief and sentiment were resolved into the elementary impressions on the senses, out of which the most refined and disinterested affections of benevolence and piety could be successively evolved, through the transforming processes of the all-pervading law of the association of ideas."³

Thus Dr. Priestly, who is the outstanding name among the Unitarians who followed Hartley's conclusions, inevitably desired to exclude from the fold of Christ all who could not accept, as irrefutable, historical facts, certain events recorded in Scripture. He "confounded *belief* as an intellectual act, with *faith* as a spiritual affection." Intellectual impatience

¹ J. J. Tayler, *op. cit.*, p. 249.

² These Dissenting Academies were first opened as a temporary expedient when restrictions were placed by the two Universities on Dissenters after the Act of Uniformity of 1662. Their influence was very great both as centres of learning and piety. It is interesting to note that both Archbishop Secker and Bishop Butler were trained in such an Academy—that of Mr. Jones of Tewkesbury.

³ J. J. Tayler, *op. cit.*, p. 288. In addition to this, Locke himself had sought for the facts of knowledge in another source which was cut out by Hartley—the suggestions of consciousness to the *tabula rasa* of the mind.

is therefore seen to be the key to the Unitarian secession; the tolerant spirit of the Presbyterians of 1719 had been quite superseded.

Since however Unitarianism in the main both began and ended in schism, it is not possible to deal with it here more fully.¹ It must suffice to note that there was a Cambridge movement of avowed Unitarians who held office in the Church of England, some of whom seceded after Edmund Burke delivered his opinion that the Church of England had power to fix its own terms of membership. To the Latitudinarians within the Church of England we must now turn.

VI

RATIONAL THOUGHT INSIDE THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

Generally speaking, the Anglican rationalist, or Latitudinarian, was saved from adopting an extreme position by his loyalty to the ideal of the Church and his love for its corporate life, though it is not possible to separate these from his practical appreciation of the value of the Church's emoluments. We have seen that the spirit of rationalism ran to seed among the Deists, and when manifested in Presbyterianism merely led to the formation of a rationalist sect. The rationalist movement in the Church of England was at first conspicuous in the Bishops—Tillotson, Burnet and Hoadly—who were elevated to the episcopate as a result of "Revolution principles."

¹ Canon E. W. Watson tells me that Jesus College, Cambridge, became the centre of this movement, and points out the interesting connections with Unitarianism of Coleridge, Charles Lamb, Leigh Hunt and Hazlitt.

The mass of the clergy were the ecclesiastical descendants of the Laudians, though crown and episcopal patronage had introduced a considerable leaven of rationalism towards the close of the century. The only difference between the rationalist Bishops and the rationalist Presbyterians was that the former were zealous for the Establishment and could see no reason why the latter should not be comprehended in it.¹ "Tillotson and Howe, Hoadly and Calamy, Burnet and Pierce, might almost have changed places, without finding it necessary to modify in any essential point their views of Christianity and the Church."²

Various schemes of comprehension were promulgated, but failed over the question of subscription to the XXXIX Articles. The Latitudinarians did not scruple to assent to these formularies while the Dissenters objected to them as unscriptural, nor could this stumbling-block be surmounted. The typical Latitudinarian bishop is Benjamin Hoadly, "the object," as Gibbon says, "of Whig idolatry and abhorrence," and the central figure in the wearisome Bangorian controversy. He explained the Kingdom of God as the invisible Church; said that episcopacy while desirable is not essential; maintained that the Church has neither authority over conscience nor possesses disciplinary powers; and explained away the mystery of the sacraments. Small wonder that so conservative a champion of orthodoxy as

¹ Tillotson is quoted by Pierce as having said, "I had much rather persuade any one to be a good man, than to be of any party or denomination whatever."

² Tayler, pp. 245, 261.

Bishop Gibson could write in 1735-6 that there was "little trouble from professed infidels, but a great deal from semi-infidels, who, under the title of Christians, were destroying the whole work of our Redemption by Christ; and making Christianity little more than a system of morality."¹ Although the first hopes of securing comprehension were frustrated, yet towards the middle of the century renewed efforts were made. The last attempt during the century was that of 1772, promoted by Archdeacon Blackburn and, *sub rosa*, Archdeacon Paley,² and known as the Feathers' Tavern Petition. This was a proposal to abolish subscription to the Articles altogether "in favour of a simple acknowledgment of belief in Scripture," but as already "open or suspected Deists and Arians were known to have signed the Articles on the ground of general conformity to the English Church,"³ there was never the remotest possibility that the rough places would be made any plainer for the hated Free-thinker. The bitterest opponents of the Petition were Edmund Burke, the Methodists, and the Evangelical Clergy. It was the rise of this entirely new element in the Church of England which was the most serious blow to the Latitudinarians,⁴ their strength having previously

¹ A. C. Fraser, *Berkeley's Works*, i, p. 244.

² Paley did not sign the Petition, saying he could not "afford to keep a conscience"!

³ Abbey and Overton, vol. i, pp. 339 f.

⁴ For example Thomas Scott, the commentator (1746-7-1821), the disciple of the converted slaver John Newton, wavered in the earlier years of his ministry between Socinianism and Arianism (Abbey and Overton, i, 201). Even the most worthless of the Deists, Lord Bolingbroke, was smitten by

been shaken by the weighty arguments of the anti-Deist divines. Finally, the horror with which the French Revolution was regarded caused the Church of England to turn entirely against the rationalism¹ to which in the first place it had given birth but which it now regarded as the equivalent of atheism.² Voltaire was hated, and the French generally were regarded as a nation of atheists.³ The English Church for the time being became reactionary.

VII

REACTION TO THE AUTHORITY OF THE EMOTIONS—
THE WESLEYANS AND THE EVANGELICALS

There is only one outstanding name in the history of the evolution of the Mystical (or Spiritual) Consciousness in the English Church, during the reign of eighteenth-century rationalism—that of William Law, the non-juror. The claims which he makes for the validity of religious experience are of the most superlative kind. “There is,” he says, “but one salvation for all mankind, and that is the life of God in the Soul. God has but one design or intent towards all Mankind, and that is to introduce or generate His own Life, Light and Spirit in them. . . . There is but one possible way for Man to attain this Salvation or Life of God in the Soul. There is not

Whitefield’s preaching, and Lady Huntingdon reckoned on making a convert of him before his death (Tayler, p. 278).

¹ Cf. Bishop Horsley’s *Charge* of 1790.

² See pp. 95, 125.

³ Cf. E. J. Payne, *Burke, Select Works*, pp. 70 ff. (Clarendon Press).

one for the Jew, another for the Christian, and a third for the Heathen. No; God is one, human nature is one, Salvation is one and the way to it is one; and that is, the desire of the Soul turned to God.”¹ These words show a grasp of the nature of God and His relation to man which differs widely from Wesley’s understanding of the work of Christ. The gulf between Law and Wesley may perhaps be said to be bridged by two Presbyterian divines of the period, Isaac Watts whose *Three Sermons on the Inward Witness of Christianity* appeared in 1720, and Philip Doddridge who published in 1745 his work on *The Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul*. But these were *rari nantes in gurgite vasto*. However, the religion of Doddridge, who was a correspondent of Wesley, consisted so much in feeling that the mention of him leads naturally to the rise of Methodism.

There are three preliminary considerations to be noted in connection with the Methodist and Evangelical revival of religion.

First, the continued suppression of Convocation weakened the Church’s corporate influence on the national life, and militated against united action in regard to Methodism.² Similarly, the considerable

¹ *Spirit of Prayer* (3rd ed. 1752), p. 96.

² See pp. 76, 83. In a collection of contemporary literature by M. Percival occurs the following, entitled *The Knight and the Prelate*, obviously referring to Robert Walpole and Bishop Gibson:—

“ My very good friend ” says the K—t “ calm your passion
I smoke what you drive at—but no C—nv—c—t—n;
Should your Ch—ch Bellows blow up the zeal of the Rabble
You’d breed more confusion than e’er was at Babel.”

I owe this, and references to Bishop Gibson on pp. 79³, 111, to Dr. N. Sykes, late of Queen’s College, Oxford.

influence of Hoadly was in the direction of a purely individualistic and non-ecclesiastical religion.

Secondly, the growing industrial population of England had scarcely come under any kind of religious influence and was certainly untouched by any ecclesiastical organisation.¹

Thirdly, the psychological upheaval in France spread to England though its manifestations were by no means identical in the two countries. In France, on the one hand the disintegrating forces at work in Deism which led to the discredit of Catholicism and the rise of atheism were supplemented by a positive movement which stirred men's hearts strangely by its passionate cry for a return to nature² and swept them into a bloody revolution by its fierce demand for Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity; on the other hand French Protestantism was seized with an epidemic of religious hysteria and "contortionism" owing to the abominable and relentless persecutions of Louis XIV. Numbers of these French Protestants, or Camisards, fled from the Cevennes to London and some of them visited Bristol "shortly before the critical year 1739"³—when the excitable George Whitefield landed from America,

¹ See pp. 75 f., 122. The Independents however, who were Calvinists, consisted chiefly of the lower classes, and were destined to exercise an increasing power in the near future.

² Cf. the prayer of Jean Jaques Rousseau: "Almighty God, deliver us from the sciences and the pernicious arts of our fathers! Grant us ignorance, innocence and poverty once more as the only things which can bring happiness and which are of value in Thine eyes!"

³ It should be noted that Wesley himself fixes the date of the revival as 1738, the year of his conversion at a Moravian meeting and due to the influence of Peter Böhler.

and John Wesley returned home from Germany. Men's thoughts, then, were full of the (so-called) 'French prophets.' A new religious enthusiasm was, as it were, floating in the atmosphere,"¹ and pre-occupation with this preserved England from social and political upheavals.

Extravagant as were some of the phenomena of the revival the strength of Methodism lay in its psychology, and this made its success inevitable. In an age which had substituted the cultivation of moral virtues for that of the life of the spirit and had not realised its religious duties to the new industrial classes, John Wesley grasped the fact that "mankind is incurably religious," or, as he himself would have said, craves a Saviour from sin. On this sound induction the success of his movement was built.

It has been seen how English Deism ended by sacrificing the individual to the general well-being, by deprecating prayer and all that belongs to personal religion, and by rendering the existence of God Himself a matter of little or no importance in a philosophical system.² In direct antithesis to this, Methodism brushed aside all such scepticism and proclaimed not merely the existence of God but the reality of direct contact with Him in prayer, thus returning to the cardinal doctrine of Protestantism, the worth of the individual to God. We are thus led once more to the all-important subject of the nature of God. Methodism marked the movement back from transcendence to immanence, and greatly enriched the current idea of God by its fuller Trinitarian doctrine.

¹ Curteis, p. 371.

² See p. 105.

To the doctrine of the Fatherhood and Beneficence of God, John Wesley added a fervent belief in the Deity of Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit within the heart of man. Eighteenth-century morality-religion, in so far as it had concerned itself at all with Christ, had inculcated only His example, while the appeal to a living spiritual experience is quite absent alike from the writings of Apologists and Deists. John Wesley's definition of religion, in complete contrast, was "the life of God in the souls of men," a phrase which shows at once his indebtedness to the man whose teaching he afterwards declared to be insufficient—William Law.¹ The difference between the two seems to be that Law was a true mystic, whose mind was capable of interpreting rationally "the formless intuitions of the Mystical Consciousness," whereas no superlative claims may be made for the quality of the mysticism which was struggling for expression in Wesley. Methodism became a religion of pure emotion and needed as a corrective the rationalism from which it was itself the recoil. An influential and terrible feature of Methodist teaching was the doctrine of everlasting punishment, and this the great mystics have never been able to view with equanimity,² seeing that it involves some failure either in the power, or in the wisdom, or in the love of God. While John Wesley conceived of God as a Being from whose wrath man was only delivered by the sacrifice of Christ, William Law insisted that

¹ See p. 112.

² This is clear from Julian of Norwich, who seems haunted by the discrepancy between her Revelation that in God there is no anger or wrath, and the teaching of Holy Church.

"Christ given *for* us is neither more nor less than Christ given *into* us."

The corollary to belief in everlasting punishment was belief in the total depravity of human nature. This served as a vindication of the rightfulness of God's wrath. Here we are led to the *crux* of the difference between Law and Wesley. The former held the characteristic doctrine of the Christian mystics—that of a Divine spark, or *synteresis*.¹ "If Christ," he says, "was to raise a new life like His own in every man, then every man must have had originally in the inmost spirit of his life a seed of Christ. . . ." Thus for William Law, the Christian life was one of gradual growth into Christ out of a state of insensibility to Him, the divine spark burning ever brighter in the conflagration of self. Salvation was regarded very differently by John Wesley. It meant indeed that Christ must take possession of the soul, but this for Wesley was no matter of growth,² being accomplished instead by a sudden infusion of God's free Grace, whereby in response to repentance and faith there followed catastrophic conversion and the perfect cure of sin's disease. These are the two peculiar lessons of Wesleyanism; "(1) instantaneous and sensible conversion, (2) the doctrine of perfection, —*i.e.* of a Christian maturity, or *τελειοτης*, on attaining which, he that is (in the Wesleyan sense) 'born again,' 'born of God,' sinneth not."³

¹ Inge, *Bampton Lectures*, pp. 282 f.

² He did not deny all growth, admitting growth in "Sanctification" after "Justification."

³ Curteis, p. 358. See I *John* iii. 9, with which contrast however, the curious words in I *John* v. 16 about "a sin unto death."

The results of this deliverance were to be eminently practical, having their fulfilment in ordered Christian service¹ on the part of the fellowship of believers who had been plucked as brands from the burning. These activities were not restricted by presuppositions concerning predestination to salvation or to hell. Thus a note of universalism was struck by John Wesley, and on this point comparison with the teaching of William Law will once again be found instructive.

Law's universalism springs naturally out of his belief in a community of nature between God and man. ". . . All our redemption," he says, "is only nature set right, or made to be that which it ought to be," a statement which leads to the following comment by the Dean of St. Paul's. "It is difficult to abstain from quoting more passages like this, in which Faith, which had been so long directed only to the unseen and unknown, sheds her bright beams over this earth of ours, and claims all nature for her own. The laws of nature are now recognised as the laws of God, and for that very reason they cannot be broken or arbitrarily suspended. Redemption is a law of life." The uniformity of nature for which the Deists contended is here seen in its proper relation to the spiritual world. Wesley's dualism prevented him from achieving such a synthesis: he did not

¹ The formation of religious societies was the method chosen by John Wesley's organising genius. It has been said that the religious societies supplied a body to Methodism. "The world," writes J. H. Overton (*The Evangelical Revival in the Eighteenth Century*, p. 53), "called the methodists mad, but at any rate there was method in their madness."

indeed—of course he could not—resort to the miraculous to restore to English Christianity its lost sense of the infinite and supernatural, but he achieved the same result by his emphasis on *spasmodic, sensible* conversion. His stress on the love of God required that none should be assumed to be excluded from the plan of salvation or regarded as unlikely subjects for spiritual re-birth. Nevertheless the universalism which Wesley placed in such a different setting from Law was undoubtedly derived in the first place from his old mentor. It was all that he retained of his first mental outfit, and sprang out of the Arminianism which had characterised the High Church party since the time of Laud.¹

As a result of his contact with the Moravians, however, Wesley's Arminianism underwent a transformation. It will be remembered that in England the influence of Arminianism² had appeared first of all as a method of theological enquiry and that it had next made itself felt in the sphere of doctrine, leading to the eighteenth-century "religion of the head"; it now passed from the head to the heart, producing a transformation which may be said to mark a distinct stage in the evolution of English religion. The doctrine of grace was the really distinctive mark of original Arminianism, and by its means a fine balance was obtained between Calvinism and Pelagianism. In England, however, this was overlaid by the sacramentalism of the Laudians, and overlooked entirely by the eighteenth-century theologians; in the Methodist revival it came into its own again in the assertion

¹ See p. 49.

² Pp. 56 f.

that sin had not fettered the will, nor destroyed any man's power to co-operate with God in the work of redemption. Arminianism demanded equity in the divine procedure, but "its doctrine of man probably differentiates it more definitely from Calvinism than its doctrine of God."¹

These are the points over which the rift occurred between the Wesleyans and the Evangelicals—the doctrine of Christian Perfection, and the universalism which sprang out of Arminianism. In the controversy over these matters which reached its acutest phase about 1769, certain determining pre-suppositions in the position of each party revealed themselves.

Churchmen attracted by the new cry of the free appeal to the feelings belonged mainly to the middle and upper classes. In consequence they were repelled by the hysterical phenomena which frequently accompanied conversion among the uncultivated artisan class to whom Wesley chiefly devoted himself, and by their claims to spiritual perfection.² These Churchmen, or Evangelicals as they are called, looked back

¹ See article by F. Platt on "Arminianism" in *Hasting's Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. i, pp. 811 f. It should be remembered, however, that George Whitefield, who was regarded by some as the founder of Methodism, was a Calvinist, which finally led him to break with Wesley. The beginning of the disruption may be dated in 1739, when Wesley felt impelled to preach on "Free Grace" in reply to a sermon on election by a lesser man, Acourt. Whitefield should more probably be regarded as the parent of the Calvinistic Methodists, and Lady Huntingdon's connection, a sub-section of the Independents.

² Thomas Scott, for example, found this pride insufferable at Olney.

to the Reformation as their model of religious reform and were Calvinists in doctrine. On the other hand, Wesley's religious career and experience fitted in admirably with the needs of the untutored masses to whom he was chiefly devoted. They wanted some kind of deliverance from their lot, a deliverance which must be authenticated by an emotional disturbance, and the limitations of Calvinism might have inhibited the ready response of their feelings. Further, they had less historical sense than their brethren within the Church and endeavoured to organise on the Presbyterian model, with the object, as Wesley said, of spreading "scriptural holiness" throughout the land. Their missionary enthusiasm led them to overstep at will the bounds of parish and diocese and to pretend to introduce true religion to a people, as it were ignorant and pagan. Such a notion was fundamentally incompatible with the doctrine of an established church in a Christian nation. Wesley himself published a revision of the XXXIX Articles in which he set aside the principle of state-establishment and sought to eliminate from them all traces of Calvinism. In spite of his own personal attachment to the Church, the position was one which was bound to render Dissent inevitable, as his brother Charles foresaw. Allegiance to Wesley's central organisation prevented the Methodists from realising the faintest notions of loyalty to the Church of England, whereas those revivalists of the better classes who had been Churchmen from the first became more and more interested in the Church¹ as they gained strength, so that some

¹ Even Hannah More, 1745-1833, said she regarded "its

of Lady Huntingdon's chaplains resigned when she registered her chapels as dissenting, and their early co-operation with the Congregationalists declined in warmth. On the other hand, as the Evangelical movement gathered momentum, and began to reach the lower classes, these were encouraged by Venn, Berridge, Grimshaw and others to attend Independent Chapels where Calvinistic doctrine was taught. This led to many secessions.¹

Methodists and Evangelicals alike appealed, as became Protestants, to the authority of the Bible. The Wesleyans found the justification of their universalism in such passages as 1 *Tim.* ii. 4, which proclaims God's will "that all men should be saved," while the Evangelicals entrenched themselves behind the predestinarian passages in St. Paul which stressed man's helplessness, and behind Our Lord's recorded claim that His death was a ransom for many (not all!). The court of the Bible by giving judgment for both parties, only made their dilemma worse. The appeal to the feelings had kept them together over the question of sensible conversion. It is plain that the stone of stumbling was the modified Calvinism of the established English Church of the eighteenth century. The significance of this must not be over-

institutions with a veneration at once affectionate and rational," and did not believe that, since the time of the Apostles, there had ever been "a Church in which the public worship was so solemn, yet so cheerful, so simple and yet so sublime, so full of fervour and at the same time so free from enthusiasm, so rich in the gold of Christian antiquity, yet so astonishingly exempt from its dross" (quoted by Hunt from *Practical Piety*, chap. ii).

¹ See p. 114.

looked. Because the Evangelicals had more than one religious authority they were saved from schism: the Methodists, however much they might profess to build their faith on the old authority, the Bible, yet found themselves helpless in the toils of a single overmastering idea, that of the emotions as the ultimate authority. They seceded in 1795.¹

It remains to summarise briefly the achievements of the Evangelicals. They "gradually changed the whole spirit of the English Church. They infused into it a new fire and passion of devotion, raised the standard of clerical duty and completely altered the whole tendency of the preaching of its ministers."² Large numbers of hymns were written, Sunday schools were opened, and a spirit of missionary enterprise and fervent philanthropy was spread abroad. Moreover English social life was permeated generally by Evangelicalism, effecting a reformation of manners and speech.³ "The essential features of its system," says Overton,⁴ "will be traceable so long as England continues to be a Christian nation." In so far as this is true it was because Evangelicalism drew

¹ Curteis states that whereas the proportion of Dissenters at the end of the first quarter of the century was 1 in 25, at the end of the century it was 1 in 4. Stoughton, however, says that at the Revolution, Churchmen numbered twenty-two for one who had left the Church; while about the year 1800 the proportion was only eight to one (*History of Religion in England*, vol. vii, p. xvii).

² Lecky, *History of England in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. ii, chap. ix.

³ See S. Baring-Gould, *The Evangelical Revival*, a book written with a strong Anglo-Catholic bias.

⁴ *The Evangelical Revival in the Eighteenth Century*, p. 203.

attention to neglected truths ; because, as has already been pointed out, its psychology was sound. It looked into the heart of man, and there found dissatisfaction, a sense of sin, a craving and a restlessness unsatisfied : it offered cleansing, a sensible conversion followed by assurance, joy, and peace, and these in return for a single supreme act of faith and self-surrender.

Yet there were certain things which disqualified the Evangelicals. They placed in antagonism the Church and the world, and consequently, since no *anima naturaliter christiana* was conceivable to them, they tended more and more to discredit speculative reason. Yet so inextricably interwoven is the use of reason with every activity of life ¹ that even they, unconsciously, were obliged to succumb and to draw out a "rational 'scheme of Christianity' in which the Atonement was made the central point of a system, and the death of Christ was accounted as necessary to satisfy the Divine justice." ² Their theology indeed became so much "a reasoned method of saving single souls" that it was unable "to admit easily, or without fracture, those larger views of God, the universe and man, needed to guide a great society in a crisis, or, as it were, in the very article of revolution." ³ Bibliolatry became and continues to be its evil genius.

¹ See chap. ii.

² Mark Pattison, *Essays and Reviews*, p. 260.

³ A. M. Fairbairn, *Catholicism, Roman and Anglican*, p. 293.

VIII

THE STATE OF THE RELIGIOUS PARTIES AT THE
END OF THE CENTURY

By the end of the eighteenth century, party strife within the Church of England had died down, but this was not because a proper synthesis of conflicting ideals had been achieved. The Church was cut off from all other religious communions, both at home and abroad, and occupied an entirely isolated place in Christendom. The bulk of the clergy were worldly and indifferent: the zeal of the old High Church race was worn out, as Alexander Knox said; its efforts to secure union with the Gallican Church and the Protestant Church of Russia had failed, and it had coquetted in vain with the Eastern Church; the party stood high and dry: the rationalist or Latitudinarian party had been suppressed, though it still had a few representatives of the type of Paley: relations had been severed with Dissenters, and as if this were not enough the Methodists also had been repelled into Dissent, partly for want of sympathetic and tactful handling. The "religious" party, the Evangelicals, were left at ease in Zion, brandishing a verbally-inspired Bible as the palladium against the blasphemies of France.

The irreligion of Frenchmen, from being viewed favourably in England, became as hateful as French military aggression, and it seemed more and more to the good Englishman that as a loyal patriot he must be also a convinced Christian. The leaders of this

movement of religious reaction were the Evangelical clergy and some of their prominent laity, who combined an ardent zeal for foreign missions and a vigorous political propaganda for the abolition of slavery with much solid and serious moral and religious effort in English parishes. The government of the day became increasingly sympathetic to the efforts of the National Church, and expressed its gratitude to Almighty God, and its sense of obligation to the spirit of religion which had upheld the nation in its long struggle with Napoleon by giving £1,500,000 towards Church building purposes.¹ But without the clash of ideals to quicken zeal and fire enthusiasm the early glories of the revival soon departed, and by the beginning of the Oxford Movement Evangelicalism to some extent had succumbed to the insidious influences which steal in the steps of success.

¹ In all, about £6,000,000 was spent on church building between 1813 and 1833.

CHAPTER VI

THE FORMATIVE FORCES OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

THE human spirit is greater than it knows. It emancipated itself at the Reformation from the dead hand of the external authority of the Church, but yet proceeded immediately to shackle itself in the still more rigid grip of the external authority of the Bible. Even by the end of the eighteenth century it had come to no clear understanding of the mystery of its being, for the revolt of the Rational Consciousness was tempered by a general acceptance of traditional beliefs. The *rationale* of the struggles of the human spirit for freedom only became plain after the introduction of a number of new forces during the nineteenth century. These were (1) the effects of the French Revolution; (2) the rise of Romanticism; (3) the formulation of a new metaphysic,—the establishment of an idealistic philosophy; (4) the conclusions of natural science and psychology; (5) the results of literary and historical criticism of the Bible.

I

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

One of the principal effects of the French Revolution on the Church of England was the change it

caused in the status of the clergy. For centuries previous to this, there had been two classes of clergy, aristocrats and peasants, a division which exists in France to-day. During the wars with France, however, the impoverished priests, whose main function it had been to act as residential curates for absentee incumbents, received the rank of commissioned officers in the English Army, in consequence of which the clergy as a whole now began to be regarded as members of the upper classes. This helped to widen still further the gulf that already existed between the Church and the new artisan class which had grown up during the eighteenth century.

The effect of the French Revolution in promoting a reactionary movement against Latitudinarianism in the Church of England has been noted.¹ This reaction, strengthened by the Napoleonic Wars, was mainly confined to the upper classes and consequently caused them to support the Evangelical party, whose ardent concern for the preparation of individual souls for blessed immortality, though it stimulated philanthropy, often bred in them a complete lack of sympathy for any kind of social reform.² Likewise, it was the upper classes who supported the Oxford Movement, which was on the whole not merely indifferent, but actually hostile, to social reform. On the other hand,

¹ See pp. 112, 125.

² Even William Wilberforce, writes C. E. Raven (*Christian Socialism*, pp. 12 f.), "never realised that, while he was bringing liberty to negroes in the plantations, the white slaves of industry in mine and factory were being made the victims of a tyranny a thousandfold more cruel. . . . Wilberforce was reckoned by Cobbett to be the worst enemy of the people then living."

the dynamic behind the Revolution in France at first found an outlet in England among the lower classes in Methodism; then, after rankling for a time under the indifference of the ruling classes to the existing economic situation, at last burst out in social disaffection under the pressure of heavy taxes and high-priced food, combined with a rising indignation at the steady growth of pauperism and the lack of representation of the bulk of the nation in Parliament. Modern democracy had come to the birth.

In France this was accompanied by a terrible convulsion of the whole nation and followed by a baptism of blood; for the human spirit, which is determined sooner or later to come into its own, had found no emancipation in France as it had in the rest of Northern Europe during the period of the Reformation. Thus, economic conditions were by no means the sole cause of the upheaval in France. Fortunately however, England was saved from revolution and atheism by the broad basis which the Reformation had given to the English Church, and a temporary estrangement between Christianity and Socialism was all that occurred. The Chartist risings of 1838-42 revealed the one-sided character of the Church's work and occasioned the rise of the movement known as Christian Socialism, of which Frederick Denison Maurice, if not the founder,¹ was confessedly the master spirit, and which contained in its ranks such ardent

¹ See C. E. Raven, *Christian Socialism*, chap. i. Robert Owen, the pioneer of Socialism and the founder of the Co-operative Movement, was embittered against Christianity by the apathy of the Church in the face of social scandals.

souls as J. M. Ludlow, Charles Kingsley, C. B. Mansfield, Tom Hughes, and E. V. Neale, and which attracted men of the world-wide fame of Ruskin and Rossetti. The aim of this movement was to create an English Christian commonwealth in which the chartist might find his spiritual home.

The optimism with which young and enthusiastic English idealists hailed the French Revolution shows a greater appreciation of the splendour of its ideals than of the difficulty of realising them in a society of imperfect individuals. The Revolution was not the dawn of a new day but the beginning of the end. In their insistence on the rights of individuals, the French forgot the duties of men. "Out of this intoxication of individualism the idealists of Europe were rudely awakened by the thunder of the cannon of Bonaparte. As the social system of Europe collapsed like a house of cards under the hand of the new Cæsar, it was made clear whither the principle of selfish individualism, which breaks up society into helpless atoms, inevitably conducts. . . . Under the pressure of a 'Continental System' and the wars of Napoleon, English national feeling was aroused, the poets of Nature and Freedom became the heralds of patriotic love, of an admiring piety towards the history of the past, which Sir Walter Scott's genius restored to new life in the hearts of his contemporaries by poetic idealisation." ¹

¹ Otto Pfleiderer, *Development of Theology*, pp. 305 f.

II

THE ROMANTIC MOVEMENT

Thus the Romantic Movement in English literature, which really has its genesis in the assertion of those human emotions which had been starved by the despotic sway of the "cold understanding" during the eighteenth century, took its direction from the French Revolution. Coleridge, his genius having been fired with revolutionary democracy so far as to write his two *Lay Sermons*, abandoned them to the Christian Socialists who claimed him as their "first voice," and devoted himself to the reconstruction of religious and philosophical thought; Southey, on the other hand, according to C. E. Raven,¹ never quite forsook his early communistic ideas. Shelley, the spiritual iconoclast, though born a generation later, may perhaps be classed with Wordsworth in England, and Herder and Goëthe in Germany, as the ardent promoter of "a return to nature and natural emotions." But Shelley, who did not write until after the alienation—apostasy, he called it—of Wordsworth from the cause of the French Revolution, had not the same experience of its failure, and so, in his revolt from a religion organised as he felt in the human interests of political reaction and marked by a spirit of insincerity, may be regarded as the poet *par excellence* of English Socialism.

Wordsworth began as a Republican and ended as

¹ *Christian Socialism*, p. 48.

a Tory : he began in defiance of everything ecclesiastical, and ended as a High Churchman.¹ Between these apparent extremes there was however an inner principle of unity.² Wordsworth was always an aristocrat at heart. His enthusiasm for democracy was, as is so often the case, the outcome of his youthful idealism. This capacity for seeing life in a golden halo expressed itself later in a different way, when an infinite gift of sympathy and pity stirred his muse to sing the beggar, the leech-gatherer, the idiot boy and the worn widow.

" Love had he found in huts where poor men lie ;
His daily teachers had been woods and rills,
The silence that is in the starry sky,
The sleep that is among the lonely hills."

Rousseau's false ideal of a return to the state of nature was transformed by Wordsworth into a poetic love of nature.³ Because he was pre-eminently the apostle of nature, Wordsworth was charged by some with being a pantheist—a wearisome taunt which is still applied to others by those who have not moved away from the mediæval idea of God. " He was not a pantheist, for he discovered in Nature a Personality " ⁴ ; he writes, for example :—

¹ Wordsworth's affection for Laud is noteworthy. In the note appended to his sonnet on the Archbishop, he states his fearless concurrence with Hume " that it is sufficient for his (Laud's) vindication to observe that his errors were the most excusable of all those which prevailed during that zealous period."

² Cf. F. W. Robertson, *A Lecture on Wordsworth*, pp. 46 ff.

³ See p. 98.

⁴ J. Marshall-Mather, *Popular Studies of Nineteenth-Century Poets*, p. 8.

“ One adequate support
For the calamities of mortal life
Exists, one only ; an assured belief
That the procession of our fate, however
Sad or disturbed, is ordered by a Being
Of infinite benevolence and power ;
Whose everlasting purposes embrace
All accidents, converting them to good.”

Yet at the same time he cannot be called a transcendentalist ; he stands midway between the two. In point of fact, Wordsworth crowned the movement back from transcendence to immanence which was commenced in the eighteenth century by John Wesley.¹ But this stress on the divine immanence is the very antithesis of Tractarian transcendentalism, an opposition which expressed itself in Wordsworth's early defiance of ecclesiasticism. He became a High Churchman later in life because he was a Tory, and had always been at heart a conservative and an aristocrat. The philosophical and theological implications of Tractarianism were not so evident then as they are now, and presumably Wordsworth was not fully alive to his inconsistency.

The genius of Scott was differently affected by the French Revolution. Allowing itself to be moulded by the newly awakened historical sense, it cast the glamour of romance about mediæval chivalry, and incidentally—for Scott's interest in the Middle Ages was not primarily religious—about mediæval ecclesiasticism. With the impetus it received from the vogue of the historical novel among the aristocracy, the spirit which at first expressed itself in a merely

¹ See p. 115.

antiquarian delight was fired to undertake a serious spiritual exploration.¹ The luxurious trifling which produced the Eglinton Tournament of 1830, was replaced by the fiery zeal which initiated the Oxford Movement in 1833.

Along with Wordsworth, the nature mystic, and Scott, who is said consciously to have treated historical facts as Turner treated landscapes, mention may be made of the appearance of landscape painting.² The pedantic classical style which had prevailed in the first half of the eighteenth century began to give way to the more truly poetical spirit which represents things as they seem through the medium of the human imagination—believing rightly that there is no divorce between appearance and reality. “The mystic and the artist were like sensitive barometers foretelling subtle changes in the spiritual atmosphere.”³

Furniture and ceramics received a similar stimulus

¹ Cf. V. F. Storr, *The Development of English Theology in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 256.

² Gainsborough, who came into prominence when he went to Bath in 1760, may be regarded as the father of modern English painting. He gave the impetus to landscape painting which was carried on by Constable and Turner into the middle of the nineteenth century. The revival of art may be regarded as a legacy of the eighteenth century.

³ Allen, *op. cit.*, p. 346. Cf. William Blake, poet, artist and mystic, who has such charm for us to-day but seems to have had no influence on his own age:—

“I assert for myself that I do not behold the outward creation, and that to me it is hindrance and not action. What! it will be questioned, ‘When the sun rises do you not see a round disc of fire somewhat like a guinea?’ Oh, no! no! I see an innumerable company of the heavenly host, crying, Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord God Almighty. I question not my corporal eye any more than I would question a window concerning a sight. I look through it, and not with it.”

about the same time, and exquisite works of art were produced until they were supplanted by the stolid Victorian fashions. The Romantic Movement however caused the Gothic style to supplant all others, and a period of dull and slavish imitation set in. The furniture of the Gothic type then produced is dull and heavy compared with the beautiful productions of Thomas Chippendale in the same style ;¹ in architecture the craze was even more disastrous, for under the guise of Church restoration attempts to secure a pseudo-mediævalism frequently resulted in nothing less than sheer vandalism and destruction of existing fabrics.² The new buildings³ erected, though solid and satisfying in some respects, are unfamiliar and on the whole arouse curiosity rather than give pleasure. Greater success was achieved in reviving mediæval methods of working, whereby the individual interest of the workman was aroused, than in the actual application of mediæval designs.

It is surprising that England produced no great musician during this period, for no art makes so immediate an appeal to the soul as music, and the greatest talent of the Teutonic races lies in their power of expression in two spheres one of which is music, the other being naturalistic truth.⁴ Browning

¹ The Gothic style, both in architecture and furniture, seems to have always had its votaries in England. Cf. Lübke, *History of Art*, vol. ii, pp. 428 ff.

² The same result had also been achieved in many cases by the uncompromising classicism of the eighteenth century.

³ *E.g.* in Oxford, the Pitt-Rivers Museum and the Church of St. Philip and St. James.

⁴ H. S. Chamberlain (*Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*, vol. ii, p. 561) summarises the factors upon which the whole

seems to have seen this very clearly, and has provided some compensation for the lack of musical genius in England by leaving us several poems dedicated to music, of which the chief is *Abt Vogler*. In this poem, he takes music "as the very mirror of the central universal laws, as "the shadowed lesson of the world" (to use Sir Thomas Browne's fine phrase), "and gains from this universal language, from its swift certitudes of intention . . . a new assurance for the certainty of the Christian truth that . . . the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." ¹

III

THE FORMULATION OF A NEW METAPHYSIC

The new richness and depth of feeling now awakened in England, which had first found expression among less cultivated minds in Methodism and among more cultivated minds in various forms of art, was nevertheless in danger of evaporating for want of a new mode of thought, which should be capable of giving to it an adequate expression and providing for it definition and support.² Even the immanental religion of Wordsworth, while it gave a richer and deeper volume to existing religious thought, still left it in the old

artistic development of the Teutonic races is founded as follows: ". . . on the one hand depth, power and directness of expression (musical genius) as our most individual gift, on the other, the great secret of our superiority in so many spheres, namely, our inborn tendency to follow nature honestly and faithfully (naturalism)."

¹ C. W. Stubbs, *The Christ of English Poetry*, pp. 182 f.

² Cf. O. Pfeiderer, *Development of Theology*, p. 306.

channels.¹ The philosophy of Locke² was all that was available, and this was utterly inadequate for the tendency in the direction of "intuitionism." In the third decade of the century, however, the genius of Samuel Taylor Coleridge deserted poetry, and betook itself to metaphysics and theology.

It may be said that Coleridge did for religious thought in England what Schleiermacher and Goëthe did for it in Germany. However it does not seem that Coleridge was in any way dependent on Schleiermacher. The latter's *Essay on St. Luke* was translated by Connop Thirlwall and published in 1825, the year in which appeared Coleridge's *Aids to Reflection* wherein his views were first expounded. He studied Kant and Schelling principally, but always insisted that he was merely re-asserting the principles of Hooker, Henry More, John Smith and Leighton, all of whom he speaks of as "Platonising divines."³

The rationalist theology of England, which, as Mark Pattison says, was in the last stage of decay and dotage, suddenly took a new lease of life, starting all over again from the point where the Cambridge Platonists began. "The evidence-makers ceased from their futile labours all at once, as beneath the spell of some magician. Englishmen heard with as much surprise as if the doctrine were new, that the Christian faith, the Athanasian Creed, of which they had come to wish that the Church was well rid, was 'the perfection

¹ See p. 133, and cf. J. Tulloch, *Movements of Religious Thought*, p. 5.

² See chap. v, sect. iii.

³ Tulloch, *Movements of Religious Thought*, p. 12.

of human intelligence'; that 'the compatibility of a document with the conclusions of self-evident reason, and with the laws of conscience, is a condition *a priori* of any evidence adequate to the proof of its having been revealed by God,' and that this 'is a principle clearly laid down by Moses and St. Paul'; lastly, that there are mysteries in Christianity but that these mysteries are reason, 'reason in its highest form of self-affirmation.'''¹ This combination of propositions taken from the *Aids to Reflection* reveals both the strength and the weakness of Coleridge's position, and shows how it is that while his "seminal" genius, as Mill speaks of it, was devoted to founding no single theological school, all the movements of religious thought in the English Church during the nineteenth century are able to find in him some support for their positions.

Coleridge protested against the shallow rationalism which tries the modes and laws of spiritual experience by the bare understanding, which faculty merely judges according to sense, and is variable in every individual; this he distinguishes from reason which is the image of God and is the same in all men.² As thus opposed to "Understanding," Hort, Storr, and Pfleiderer conclude that "Reason is shown to be the organ for apprehending intuitively, truth as a whole, and not merely moral truth."³ A good example of

¹ *Essays and Reviews*, pp. 263 f.

² Cf. Hunt, *Religious Thought in England in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 93. Coleridge is here following the distinction first made by Kant between *Verstand* (the practical reason) and *Vernunft* (the purely logical faculty). Cf. also W. R. Inge, *Faith and its Psychology*, p. 75.

³ V. F. Storr, *op. cit.*, p. 335.

this is the following from the *Table-Talk*: "The Understanding suggests the materials of reasoning: the Reason decides upon them. The first can only say, this *is* or *ought* to be so. The last says, It *must* be so." Sometimes, however, though not as a general rule, Coleridge divides reason itself into two classes, the speculative and the practical, the former being apparently equated with the understanding. The function of the practical reason is to witness to moral and spiritual truths, and these Coleridge maintains, are self-evident to man, who is both human and divine. Christianity is the natural development of human character.¹ When, however, Coleridge makes this distinction between the two kinds of reason, he shows a tendency to ascribe to the practical reason a meaning which passes beyond the moral sphere. He describes it, for example, as the intellectual intuition of spiritual objects. Propositions such as this "betray . . . a questionable inclination to suppress intelligent criticism in religious questions."² It is impossible not to suspect that Newman's keen insight had detected this when he claimed that Coleridge was the philosophical initiator of the movement, who succeeded in interesting the genius of the age "in the cause of Catholic truth."³ But apart from this dangerous tendency in Coleridge's thought, none did so much as he to restore the lost balance between reason and religion; so far from intending to divorce them he

¹ Cf. Dr. Chalmers' statement about Christianity to Carlyle in 1820: "All written in us already in sympathetic ink; Bible awakens it, and you can read."

² O. Pfeiderer, *op. cit.*, p. 309.

³ *Apologia pro Vita Sua*, p. 97 (Ed. 1865).

brought them together by enlarging the current conception of both. He was the founder of a new era of *theological expansiveness*, and in this capacity his truest disciples were Julius Charles Hare and Frederick Denison Maurice.

There are, according to Tulloch, three respects in which Coleridge gave a definite impulse to the religious thought of his time: (a) by a renovation of current Christian ideas; (b) by an enlarged conception of the Church; (c) by an advance in Biblical study. The first of these received his especial attention in the *Aids to Reflection*, the second in his volume *On the Constitution of Church and State* (1830), and the third in the *Confessions of an Inquiring Spirit* (1840 posthumous).

(a) There is nothing, he says, the absolute ground of which is not a mystery. Yet, so far as these mysteries are revealed, they are comprehensible to reason. There are three ultimate *facts* to which a religious philosophy must have immediate reference; namely, the Reality of the Law of Conscience; the existence of a Responsible Will as the subject of that law; and lastly, the existence of Evil—of Evil essentially such, not by accident of outward circumstances, not derived from its physical consequences, nor from any cause out of itself. The first is a Fact of Consciousness; the second a Fact of Reason necessarily concluded from the first; and the third a Fact of History interpreted by both.¹

The mystical element in Coleridge's metaphysic at once places it in line with the thought of the great

¹ *Aids, etc. (Elements of Religious Philosophy).*

Christian speculative mystics, who present the most striking similarities to each other under entirely different circumstances of time, race, and place. The primary solution of the mysteries of man's redemption is the same in the Greek Fathers, the Cambridge Platonists, William Law, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Frederick Denison Maurice and in the modern representatives of the school,¹ namely that God and man have a community of nature.

This involves a change of emphasis from Latin or Western Christianity as a whole—whether Roman Catholicism or English Evangelicalism—which always puts the Atonement in the forefront: Greek Christianity lays all the stress on the Incarnation and asserts in fact that the Incarnation *is* the Atonement. The nature of sin (*ἁμαρτία*) is in no wise minimised in this view—but takes on again its literal meaning of “missing a mark.” Man is indeed a fallen creature, says Coleridge, not because sin is inherited, but because sin is a spiritual evil, and is therefore a condition of the will, which is the intelligent self, or the spiritual in man.² This was an over-turning of the whole basis of Evangelical theology.

In Coleridge's scheme of redemption, the only power which can remedy the evil, enlighten the conscience, and educate the will is “the co-eternal Word and only-begotten Son of the Living God, incarnate, tempted, agonising, crucified, submitting to death, resurgent, communicant of his Spirit, ascendant, and obtaining for his Church the Descent, and Communion of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter.”³

¹ *E.g.* Canon J. M. Wilson of Worcester.

² *Aids, etc. (Original Sin).*

³ *Ibid. (On Redemption).*

This sentence reveals the spiritual basis not only of Coleridge's doctrine of the Trinity, but also of his entire theology. With regard to the Trinity, he insists that the doctrine of Redemption involves belief in the Divinity of our Lord: this again, involves the reality of that idea, in which alone the Divinity of Christ can be received without breach of faith in the unity of the Godhead—the idea of the Trinity.¹

(b) The extension of Coleridge's thought to the nature and constitution of the Church is one of his most distinctive contributions to the religious thought of the times. He did much to develop the idea of "the Church as an intellectual as well as a spiritual commonwealth," and removed the false antithesis between the Church and the world which had been emphasised so much by Calvinistic Evangelicalism. His "clerisy" was not merely the clergy, but the learned of all denominations—the sages and professors of law, medicine, and physical science; in short, of all the liberal arts and sciences, the possession and application of which constitute the civilisation of a country.² In this aspect of his thought on the Church, it is conceived as catholic, spiritual and invisible, and is indeed the opposite of the world; but this is no false antithesis, depending instead upon the consecration of the secular to sacred purposes. On the other hand, he has also very clear ideas on a national Church and its duties. The national Church is the State itself in its intensest federal union;³ and it is conceived as the shrine of morality.³

¹ *Aids, etc. (Aphorisms on Spiritual Religion, No. II).*

² Hunt, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

³ *Aids, etc. (Aphorisms on Spiritual Religion, No. XI).*

In his enlarged conception of the Church, Coleridge's true disciples once again were Maurice and the Broad Churchmen, though the idea of the Church held by Arnold and Stanley is more akin to that of Hooker than to that of Coleridge.

(c) Coleridge grasped quite clearly the implications of Biblical study in the recent awakening of the historical spirit. Although Arnold, Whately, Thirlwall and others were engaged on the same task, yet "to him belongs the honour of having first plainly and boldly announced that the Scriptures were to be read and studied like any other literature, in the light of their continuous growth, and the adaptation of their parts one to another."¹ His views on inspiration are of course all of a piece with the main theme of his theology which finds a seed of the divine in all men and in their good works. Thus the Bible becomes for him the supreme text-book, among many inferior ones, of religious experience.

The balance of his views on Church and Bible, and his understanding of the worth and place of the human spirit, are well brought out in the *Pentad of Operative Christianity* which he prefixed to the *Confessions of an Inquiring Spirit*. "The Scriptures, the Spirit, and the Church, are co-ordinate; the indispensable conditions and the working causes of the perpetuity and continued renaissance and spiritual life of Christ still militant. The Eternal Word, Christ from everlasting, is the *Prothesis*, or identity;—the Scriptures and the Church are the two poles, or *Thesis* and *Antithesis*; and

¹ *Confessions of an Inquiring Spirit* (quoted from Tulloch, p. 25).

the Preacher, in direct line under the Spirit but likewise the point of junction of the Written Word and the Church, is the *Synthesis*. This is God's Hand in the World."

It is not possible further to illustrate the application of Coleridge's view of Christianity to its selected doctrines; it must suffice to underline his importance for the Church of England in the evolution of both the Rational Consciousness and the Mystical Consciousness.

In considering the rise of the new metaphysic in England brief mention must be made of Thomas Carlyle, for although he represents the movement of religious thought in Scotland,¹ yet his influence in the Church of England has been great. Carlyle (1795-1881) and Coleridge between them, constructed an idealistic philosophy for the British Isles based on that which was rapidly falling into disfavour in Germany. What Coleridge lacked in moral earnestness and industry Carlyle supplied, so that he attracted those of their contemporaries who were repelled by what Carlyle called "Coleridgian moonshine." Carlyle had fought his way from the decided scepticism—"the Everlasting Nay"—to which the influence of Gibbon and Hume had led him, to an intense belief in the spiritual constitution of men and the world—"the Everlasting Yea." "It was the repetition in an individual of the same process as had been passed through in German philosophy a generation earlier; when the world of orthodox belief, destroyed by the criticism of the under-

¹ It is not possible here to make further exceptions in the cases of Erskine and Campbell although these exercised great influence over the philosophy of Maurice. Some reference is made to their work on p. 152.

standing, was reconstructed from the subjective resources of man as a moral and rational being.”¹ In his reaction to “intuitionism,” Carlyle came to abhor all theological systems and formulas, and while he perceived that some kind of symbols are necessary for the embodiment of ideas he was emphatic that these “clothes” must be discarded when they have grown old.²

In the latter half of the century, almost contemporaneous with the establishment of the theory of evolution by Charles Darwin, the construction of a new evolutionary philosophy was commenced and systematically worked out by Herbert Spencer, “now filling it in by happy and ingenious conjectures, now extending it by well-devised abstractions and telling analogies.”³ He hoped to put an end to the conflict between religion and science by relegating the sway of the former to the sphere of the unknowable, which was posited by him as the ground and source of the phenomenal with which alone science was concerned. “This combination of Positivism in science with Agnosticism in religion and philosophy became highly popular in a wide circle in England during the last third of the nineteenth century.”

But the Hegelian, or intellectualist, wing of Romanticism, entered into a new lease of life in England. In 1883 T. H. Green’s *Prolegomena to Ethics* appeared. Like Spencer, Green did not dispute the conception

¹ Pfeiderer, *op. cit.*, p. 312.

² *Sartor Resartus*, p. 155.

³ Martineau, Introduction to Tayler’s *Religious Life*, etc., p. 30.

of a general law of evolution, but he was not agnostic concerning the nature of the power behind the universe, seeing in it the manifestation of a personal God, a God moreover, who revealed Himself to man in the springs of conscience, heart, will, reason. In this respect Green's philosophy differed from the sceptical philosophy of Dean Mansel, the popular but irrational Christian apologist, who maintained that God is unknown to and unknowable by man except in supernatural revelation.¹ Green also dispelled the shadow which Locke's "sensationalism" still cast over English philosophy, and which had received its last able exposition from John Stuart Mill. "But the influence of Green, beyond any definite philosophical doctrine, lay in the fact that he was the prophet of reason and the spirit."²

In concluding this section, it is only possible to say that the course of Naturalism in England received further checks from James Martineau, Edward and John Caird, Samuel Butler the author of *Erewhon*, James Ward, F. H. Bradley, and A. J. Balfour, in the critical attitude which these, especially the two last, adopted towards the presuppositions on which all science rests. About the close of the century a new philosophy, with a more realistic³ basis in evolutionary biology and psychology, was developed by William James in America and Henri Bergson in Europe.

¹ See p. 175 for a further discussion of Mansel's philosophy.

² Scott Holland, *The Philosophy of Faith and the Fourth Gospel*, Introduction, p. 7, by W. Richmond.

³ English philosophers as a whole tend to be realists. The German Idealism was more congenial to Scotchmen. Kant was of Scotch descent.

IV

THE CONCLUSIONS OF NATURAL SCIENCE AND
PSYCHOLOGY ¹

The achievements of natural science entirely revolutionised the study of theology. La Mettrie's theory of the "man-machine" received further support in 1828 when the German chemist Wöhler destroyed the difference that was hitherto supposed to exist between living and non-living matter by producing an organic compound (urea) from inorganic materials.² Soon afterwards Schleiden and Schwann promulgated their famous theories that growth is the result of the automatic absorption by cells of outside material; the problem of animal heat and energy could now be explained by the transformation of sunlight, first in the organisms of plants, and then in the appropriation of the latter by animals. "Hence biology came to be regarded as a compartment of physics and chemistry." But one remaining link in the chain needed to be forged. How could the infinite variety and complexity of the form of animal and vegetable life be accounted for? ³ The theory had been pro-

¹ See J. C. Hardwick, *Religion and Science*. This section is indebted to Mr. Hardwick's book for several quotations. It has also been checked by the valuable *Retrospect* of the work of the British Association during the years 1831-1921 (O. J. R. Howarth).

² Cyanic acid and ammonia.

³ The evolutionary conception took its rise in Germany in the eighteenth century in a reaction from Linnæus' theory of the immutability of species, and is met with again in the revolt of Herder, Kant, and Goëthe against dogma: it was the master thought of Hegelian philosophy.

In England, the idea of development was employed by

pounded by Lamarck in 1809 that new species came into existence, after many generations, as a result of the disuse or "adaptation" of particular organs in the original species, or as a result of the formation of new organs for use in new "environments" by means of "acquired habits." For many years Lamarck's theory was ridiculed chiefly because of the immense tract of time it involved, until it was made credible by Lyell's *Principles of Geology*, published between 1829 and 1833. In these volumes "Lyell may be said to have extended the age of the earth *ad infinitum*. Just as Galileo removed all barriers of space, Lyell removed those of time. Their joint achievement was to present to humanity a universe infinite both in space and time—a staggering conception." The only new contribution made by Darwin's *Origin of Species* (1859) was to ascribe "natural selection" purely to chance; he conceived of life simply as poured into an environment and taking

Hampden as early as 1832 (*Bampton Lectures*); by Robert Fellowes in 1836 (*The Religion of the Universe*); by Newman in a sermon preached in 1843 and again, more fully, in 1845 (*Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*); and by Julius C. Hare in 1846 (*The Mission of the Comforter*). The doctrine of evolution also owed a great deal to the poets Browning and Tennyson; in their hands science became romantic as well as being historical. That man is endlessly progressive is one of Browning's great hopes. It is set forth in *Paracelsus*, which was published as early as 1835; again, in *Cleon*, we learn that in the evolution of the race there is first the portion of mankind, then the combinations, and that self-conscious life must have eternity for its fulfilment. Tennyson's *In Memoriam* appeared in 1850, while the poem where the "Two Voices" dispute on evolution and immortality was written some twenty years before the *Origin of Species* appeared.

shape therefrom, whereas Lamarck had left a place for the action of effort or will on the part of the species concerned. A completely fatalistic and mechanistic position was now possible, and this considerably reinforced the already popular materialism. It is characteristic, however, that in the inevitable protests made by the clergy during the nineteenth century against the conquests of physical science, the problem of Biblical infallibility loomed larger than the more serious problem as to whether the universe might be said to contain any spiritual reality or significance. Not only the Mosaic astronomy, but the entire Mosaic cosmogony had been destroyed. The whole structure of traditional divinity collapsed, based as it was on the Fall and its reversal by Jesus Christ ; there was no room left for " the drama of a ruined perfection and a lost Paradise " ¹: lastly, the period of " second causes " had been extended back indefinitely so that it became doubtful if the divine fiat of Creation had ever gone forth at all. With the problem of " final causes " was bound up of course such questions as the whole conception of miracle and the dependence of mind on brain, and disputes on these subjects continue to rage in the twentieth century, though their solution to-day is greatly simplified, given a belief in the Divine immanence as well as transcendence, and the retreat of modern science from the over-dogmatic position which it confidently adopted in the first flush of success.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the idealistic philosophy ² which had established itself in

¹ Martineau, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

² See section iv of this chapter.

England was strengthened by factors which proclaimed the shallowness of the mechanical view. A critical philosophy of science ¹ pointed out that the so-called "laws of nature" are no more than "observed uniformities," of which the mind makes use in adapting circumstances to itself, while the discovery of a number of new facts in physics,² biology,³ and psychology ⁴ tended to discredit the mechanical view as a final explanation of reality. "The indestructibility of matter, even the conservation of energy and of mass (corner stones of the mechano-materialist view) began openly to be questioned, not by metaphysicians, but by men of science themselves." Nevertheless, scientific method is still sound, though it is now seen that there is a larger difference between the subject matter of the different sciences than was before realised. The world of physical science is a make-believe world, and whoever mistakes it for reality follows a phantasy; the world of biology takes more facts into account and is therefore more real; in its light, physics and chemistry must be reinterpreted; similarly the psychological interpretation of the world gives a still more adequate representation of facts. To enter into the fullness of relationships—this is religion.⁵

¹ Mach and Boutroux are the chief names.

² The new doctrine of matter as energy was first propounded in 1899 by J. J. Thompson. Other important names are E. Rutherford, J. Larmor, and W. Crookes. It was finally established by the discovery of X-radiation and then of radium.

³ *E.g.* by Hans Driesch, J. S. Haldane, and J. A. Thomson.

⁴ *E.g.* by William James, W. McDougall, and Henri Bergson.

⁵ Lecture by J. S. Haldane (*Hibbert Journal*, April, 1923).

V

LITERARY AND HISTORICAL CRITICISM OF THE BIBLE

In England there was no sure appreciation of the principles of the literary and historical criticism of the Bible until nearly the middle of the nineteenth century, although the first awakening of the historical view of the Scriptures may be perceived in the Deist controversy of the eighteenth century.¹

Between the years 1800 and 1834, three of the Bampton Lecturers inveighed fiercely against the conclusions of the newly established Geological Society, and such elementary work as was done in the sphere of Biblical criticism proper made very little impression on the mind of the age, in fact barely attracting notice before the third decade of the century. In 1800 Alexander Geddes, a Roman Catholic, had put forward a several-document theory of *Genesis*, and in 1801 a discussion of the Synoptic problem, based on the theory of an original Hebrew document, was contributed by Herbert Marsh, a Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge. The work of these two men called attention to the fact that real problems existed.

In 1827 Connop Thirlwall and Julius Hare began to publish their translation of Niebuhr's *History of Rome*, and this awakened the fears of the *Quarterly* that the destructive German criticism was being applied similarly to the Bible in Cambridge—an alarm which appeared to be justified after the appearance in 1829 of the *History of the Jews*, by the Oxford scholar Milman. The first rumblings of the coming storm were caused

¹ See pp. 92, 94 f.

by Dr. Hampden's *Bampton Lectures* of 1832, whose main thesis was that the pure Christian revelation formulated in orthodox theological dogmas was united in certain cases to a fallible scholastic philosophy. These lectures had been published two years before Newman and Pusey discovered them to be heretical. In the first third of the century, however, the greatest of the Bible critics was Coleridge,¹ who had studied abroad and had learned from Eichhorn the principles of literary criticism and from Lessing the meaning of historical development.

It is necessary to mention the work in Scotland at this time of Thomas Erskine (1788-1870) and John McLeod Campbell (1800-1872), for these, together with Coleridge, were the sources from which Maurice drew his most characteristic teaching. On account of his views—which were largely those of Erskine who was a layman—Campbell was deprived of his parish by the Scottish General Assembly in 1831. Later he worked out more fully his ideas on the relation to God of mankind through their representative Head, Christ, in his book *The Nature of the Atonement and its Relation to Remission of Sins and Eternal Life*. In this, he discarded all theories of substitution, taught that eternal punishment did not imply endless punishment, and subjected the external authority of the Bible to the criticism of the individual judgment.

¹ See pp. 143 f. where an estimate of his contribution in this respect was included in the general discussion of Coleridge. It is to be noted that Whately, Hampden, and Arnold seem to have known little of German critical methods and remained entirely English in their spirit of theological inquiry (cf. Tulloch, p. 61).

Among the many activities of Thomas Arnold's life, Biblical scholarship can hardly be said to have been his *forte*, yet he "saw plainly enough that the growth of criticism heralded a revolution in traditional theology," and set himself "to show that a frank acceptance of the results of criticism in no way impaired, but rather heightened, the essential value of the Bible,"¹ complaining at the same time of the lack of a proper science of Biblical theology. He himself distinguished between historical and spiritual truth, and emphasised the progressive character of the divine revelation in Scripture, thus applying, consciously or unconsciously, the idea of evolution to the Old Testament.

During the years 1840 to 1855, no Biblical work of any great importance was done in England :² Strauss' *Leben Jesu*, published in 1835-6, began to be known³ and to spread consternation in England as it had done in Germany. A turning point, however, was marked by the year 1855, when there appeared a joint edition and version of the principal Pauline Epistles by Benjamin Jowett and A. P. Stanley, the pupil and biographer of Arnold. Their copious notes and dissertations introduced into England the results of Ferdinand

¹ V. F. Storr, *op. cit.*, pp. 190 ff. Later, Arnold's son, Matthew Arnold, had considerable influence on the public mind, in the direction of an ethical idealism, through his books, *God and the Bible*, *St. Paul and Protestantism*, *Literature and Dogma*.

² *Catholic Thoughts on the Bible and Theology* (1848), by F. Myers, was only printed for private circulation, and was not made public till 1874 when its conclusions concerning inspiration, revelation, etc., were no longer striking.

³ A cheap translation in pamphlet form appeared first and in 1846 George Eliot published her translation.

Baur's critical labours, and in view of Evangelical dogmatism had the great merit, as Martineau points out, of showing conclusively what the Apostle did *not* mean. Large numbers of questions were raised, such as Atonement and Satisfaction, the Second Coming of Christ, the identity of the "Man of Sin," and the supposed distinction between natural and revealed religion, all of which entangled problems Jowett treated "with a subtle depth and moral tenderness rarely found within the compass of so large an intellectual view."

The fame of these commentaries has been overshadowed by the less original and less interesting volume known as *Essays and Reviews* (1860) by seven prominent members of the English Church. The attention and controversy which these writings occasioned was due only to the panic deliberately created by the *Westminster Review*. The essays introduced a scientific note into the method and study of theology which has been more or less characteristic of subsequent investigation down to the present time. "The great idea of evolution underlying all processes of thought as well as of nature, came into prominence."¹ Mr. James Stephen in his defence of the essayists before the Court of Arches,² said that the aim of accusing orthodoxy was to put asunder reason and faith, which God had joined together. An appeal to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council—chiefly composed of laymen—eventually secured a judgment which saved the rights of theological learning, by demanding, not an acknow-

¹ Tulloch, p. 328.

² See Broderick and Fremantle, *Ecclesiastical Judgements of the Privy Council*, pp. 247 ff.

ledgment of the authenticity, nor of the inspiration of the books of Scripture, but only of their canonicity. Nevertheless the essays were condemned by Convocation.

“While the ecclesiastical waters were still heaving with this storm of the seven winds, a new wave of disturbance was advancing from the seas of South Africa, and in 1862 rolled into the Thames, to the alarm of Lambeth and Fulham, and all low-lying Church districts.”¹ The Bishop of Natal, Dr. Colenso, was a mathematician, and the difficulties of his Zulu converts led him to see the impossibility of the Mosaic chronology and statistics. His interest aroused, he studied Hebrew, and prosecuting his enquiries further, arrived at conclusions concerning the composition of the Old Testament singularly like those which are now generally received. Colenso was excommunicated by his Metropolitan, Bishop Gray of Cape Town, and it is regrettable to find both Hampden and Maurice raising their voices in the general clamour for the bishop’s deprivation.² In 1865 the Privy Council pronounced that the coercive legal jurisdiction claimed by the Bishop of Cape Town was null and void, and Colenso held himself acquitted by this judgment, though no decision was ever passed on the underlying essential question of the place of Biblical criticism in the Church of England.³

¹ Martineau, *Introduction to Tayler’s Religious Life*, p. 14.

² Stanley, however, asked him to preach in Westminster Abbey.

³ The case is not therefore quite in line with the *Essays and Reviews* and Gorham cases (see F. W. Cornish, *A History of the English Church in the Nineteenth Century*, vol. ii, chap. xii.

Scarcely was this decision announced, when an anonymous writer, since known to be Sir John Seeley, created a fresh sensation with his book *Ecce Homo*¹ (1866) in which he attempted to put aside all theological and dogmatic pre-suppositions and to draw a refreshing picture of the Christ of the Synoptic Gospels. Three important characteristics of this treatment should be noted, since they were prophetic of the trend of modern Biblical criticism. In the first place, in selecting the data for his historical outline, the writer confines himself in the main to the Gospel of St. Mark, which is now seen, by its continuity and logical sequence, to bear the hall-mark of historicity; thus Seeley neglects the accounts of the Virgin Birth. In the second place, for the didactic material, the writer uses the additional matter common to St. Matthew and St. Luke, now known as Q, and considered by most scholars to be the earliest of all the Gospel records. In the third place, the witness of St. John is only called in to confirm the witness of St. Mark and Q, thereby drawing attention to the outstanding problem of present-day New Testament criticism—the historicity and authorship of the Fourth Gospel.

Further landmarks in the rise of Biblical criticism are the volumes of essays known as *Lux Mundi* (1889) and *Contentio Veritatis* (1902). In the last pages of his

¹ It is interesting to find Seeley's book spoken of with approval in Bishop Gore's last volume (*Belief in Christ*, p. 48). This is emblematic of the way in which the main conclusions of the supposedly heretical books mentioned in this section are now generally accepted. A useful account of these reversals of opinion is given by C. W. Emmet in *Conscience, Creeds and Critics* (chap. ii).

essay of *Inspiration*, Dr. Gore, the editor of the former volume, who had been supposed to be anti-liberal, expressed his conviction that Our Lord's human knowledge was limited. To meet the results of his critical and historical investigations, Dr. Gore adumbrated a “Kenotic” theory of Christ's Person, an attempt at Christological reconstruction which was developed more adequately in his Bampton Lectures on *The Incarnation*, and again in his *Dissertations*.

The future of Biblical criticism has now long been assured, though the mass of Christians still live under the shadow of verbal and plenary inspiration. Modern English theological students owe much to the group of Cambridge scholars, Westcott, Lightfoot and Hort, who brought to the closest study of the facts of the New Testament and the early Church, great resources of learning and insight: ¹ “a similar debt is due to the leading Old Testament scholars, A. B. Davidson, W. Robertson Smith, T. K. Cheyne, and S. R. Driver.” All these have made the books both of the Old and New Testaments live in the light of the circumstances of their origin, and of the contemporary ideas of their respective times.² But it is impossible and unnecessary here to deal with the long succession of critics who have contributed so much to the modern understanding of the Scriptures.³ The work still goes steadily on,

¹ Lightfoot seems to have been lacking in this last respect. Hort said he had neither “the insight nor the delusion of subtlety.”

² See Tulloch, p. 330.

³ An invaluable and critical summary of our scholars and their contributions is to be found in Canon Cheyne's *Founders of Old Testament Criticism*.

the latest attempt to arrive at a reconstruction of theology¹ being *Foundations*, which met with the usual storms of protest and denunciation.

¹ *The Girton Conference* of "Modern Churchmen," 1921, confined its efforts to the reconstruction of Christology in particular.

CHAPTER VII

THE REAPPEARANCE OF THE THREE HISTORIC PARTIES IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY AND THEIR RECONSTRUCTION

IN the last chapter a brief survey was made of the five formative forces at work in England during the nineteenth century—the French Revolution, the Romantic Movement, the new idealistic philosophy, natural science, and the science of the higher literary and historical criticism. With these in mind, it is now necessary to return to the consideration of the parties within the English Church, and to see how their existence was affected, and their future determined, by their attitude towards these forces.

I

THE EVANGELICALS

The principles of Evangelicalism have already been described, and since these changed but little throughout the nineteenth century, little more needs to be added. The reaction of the Evangelicals to the external authority of the Bible away from the internal authority of the human spirit, which was caused by the French Revolution, has persisted until recent times, so that the great formative forces of the last century left

Evangelicalism untouched, except in a negative manner.

During the early years of the century, though the movement as a whole soon lost its first freshness, there still remained such vigorous spirits as Charles Simeon of Cambridge, the Clapham Sect¹ guided by William Wilberforce, Fowell Buxton, Lord Ashley,² Bishops Ryder and the two Sumners, and Daniel Wilson.³ The work done by these and their successors in the field of philanthropy was so great that they could not be ignored; but although they were powerful they were not popular.⁴ With the activity of their numerous missionary societies the need of central organisation became pressing after the loss of the "Claphamic System" with its "Sun," and Exeter Hall was built in 1831 to supply this lack.

During the next thirty years the leading Evangelicals were T. T. Biddulph, Hugh McNeile, Hugh Stowell, Francis Close, and H. V. Elliott, who invaded and captured the pulpits of Bristol, Liverpool, Manchester, Cheltenham, and Brighton respectively.

The celebrated case of *Gorham v. Philpotts* occupied great attention among churchmen during the years 1847 and 1850, and by the final judgment of the Privy Council the Calvinistic doctrine of baptismal regenera-

¹ See Sir James Stephen, *Essays on Ecclesiastical Biography*, 5th ed., 1867, Nos. IX and X.

² Afterwards the Earl of Shaftesbury.

³ See G. R. Balleine, *A History of the Evangelical Party*, for accounts of these and others, written from the point of view of a convinced Evangelical.

⁴ F. W. Cornish, *A History of the English Church in the Nineteenth Century*, Part I, p. 30.

tion was declared not to be contrary to the teaching of the Church of England, a decision which confirmed the rights of the Evangelicals to full membership in the English Church.

During the next twenty years the Evangelicals waged war on the Ritualists, securing a number of Pyrrhic victories on ceremonial issues, until the Anglo-Catholics too, by the Bennett judgment, firmly established their right also to constitute one of the three recognised parties in the English Church.

Evangelical life did not stagnate at this time. Such men as William Champneys in Whitechapel, and William Cadman of St. George's, Southwark, are instances of clergymen whose whole life was given to the poor and the miserable.¹ Besides the great and increasing work of the Church Missionary Society, other associations flourished, amongst them the Colonial and Continental Church Society, "which chiefly aims at bringing spiritual help to British emigrants . . . and has also done good work for English-speaking sailors and artisans at European seaports and inland towns."¹ Missionary endeavour at home² was stimulated further by the Moody and Sankey Mission of 1875, conducted by two unknown Americans who made an enormous impression throughout the British Isles and brought to practical fruition

¹ F. W. Cornish, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 210 f.

² Services attended by huge congregations were held in Exeter Hall, and later in theatres, after the legitimatisation of unconsecrated buildings for public worship by the Religious Worship Bill of 1855. Organised Children's Services were also commenced for the first time in England about this date.

the Evangelical Alliance formed in 1845 for the purpose of cementing Evangelicalism within and without the Church of England. In the same year (1875), a desire "for the promotion of Scriptural holiness,"¹ led to the first Keswick Convention: this is still held annually and affords the best existing opportunity for a study and understanding of Evangelicalism.

Of recent years the prominent names have been J. C. Ryle, Bishop of Liverpool, E. H. Bickersteth, Bishop of Exeter, A. W. Thorold, Bishop of Winchester, H. C. Moule, Bishop of Durham, and Dr. Chavasse, Bishop of Liverpool; but "the pillar and bulwark of the Evangelicals for fifty years was Anthony Ashley Cooper, seventh Earl of Shaftesbury (1801-1885)."² His death may be said to mark the beginning of a real decline in the Evangelical party in the Church of England, though Balleine estimates that more than a quarter of the parishes were in their hands at the beginning of the twentieth century.³ However that may be, they are a greatly declining power in the English Church, for reasons which must now be discussed.

First, Evangelical religion is markedly individualistic, and individualism has not been able to stand alone before the historical and social view of mankind which has become prevalent since the Oxford and the Christian Social Movements. Secondly, because they discredited human nature and the use of speculative reason, the Evangelicals have never become an intellectual force in the English Church.

¹ See Balleine, *op. cit.*, p. 302, and cf. p. 121 of this book.

² Cornish, vol. ii, p. 213.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 314.

For this they were bound to pay dearly during an age which has seen a remarkable development in the authority accorded to the Rational Consciousness. They have suffered severely under the relentless progress of literary and historical criticism of the Bible and their phraseology has become obsolete and even repellent to those not bred in Evangelical circles. Further, under the protests of the Spiritual Consciousness against the cardinal Calvinistic doctrine of predestination, missionary activity became the very lifeblood of Evangelicalism, which henceforth presented itself plainly as an irrational system the beliefs of which were unrelated to its practical working. Some have stifled the protests of the Rational Consciousness and trusted blindly and irrationally "that theirs are the last days, and that the world's victorious unbelief will prove the prevailing invitation to the irresistible self-manifestation of the Lord, and the final triumph in which they will have their part."¹ Thirdly, under the protests of the Moral Consciousness against the doctrines of eternal punishment and the total depravity of human nature, some weakening in the austerities of a life of holiness which was prompted largely by fear has been inevitable, nor does the Evangelical "scheme" allow of the necessary re-adjustment. Lastly, Evangelicalism has been at the mercy of all who could draw out a "scheme" of Christianity based on texts taken from the Bible: the number of Biblical sects has now become enormous.

¹ Beard, *The Reformation*, p. 415. Millenarianism has flourished among Evangelicals largely as a result of their missionary work among the Jews.

Under this all-round pressure many of the Evangelicals, long before the Anglo-Catholics, felt the difficulties of their position, and the consequent growth of a large group of Liberal Evangelicals ¹ to-day forbodes the wreck of the remnants of the party. A melancholy symbol of this is the recent division in the venerable Church Missionary Society.

While the Liberal Evangelicals swell the ranks of Modernism, fearful and traditional Evangelicals seek an alliance with fearful and traditional Anglo-Catholics, much as in the days of *Essays and Reviews* "when Dr. Pusey rushed into the arms of the *Record* and Archdeacon Denison embraced Dr. McCaul," when, it was said, "was fulfilled that which was spoken by the Evangelist, 'from that day Herod and Pontius Pilate were friends.' " ²

II

THE ANGLO-CATHOLICS

Reference has been made to the inactivity of the High Church party at the beginning of the nineteenth century. It was not a large party and was generally so lacking in fire and in insistence on the distinctive tenets of English Catholicism, that Overton and Storr ³ deem it better to refer to it simply as the Orthodox party. The bulk of its members were, as Dean Church describes them, "kindly,

¹ The attitude of these in the present crisis may be studied in two recently published volumes of Essays, *Liberal Evangelicalism* and *Anglican Essays*.

² Hunt, *Religious Thought in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 219.

³ *Op. cit.*, p. 79.

helpful, respectable, sociable persons of good sense and character, workers rather in a fashion of routine which no one thought of breaking, sometimes keeping up their University learning, and apt to employ it in odd and not very profitable inquiries." Among these, "the custom of daily service and even of fasting was kept up more widely than is commonly supposed."¹ The majority were strong Church and State men, many of whom were wise and learned, and who were cautious in policy: but there was also another group, who, "while not despising the connection of Church and State, regarded the Church as in essence a purely spiritual organisation."² Of these, the chief representatives were Van Mildert, Horsley, Daubeney, and Alexander Knox, and in their writings are to be found all the leading doctrines of the Tractarians,² for they maintained that episcopacy is essential, that the possession of the Apostolic Succession constitutes the Church of England a true part of the Catholic Church, and that without it the sacraments would be invalid. Their successors, and the immediate precursors of the Oxford Movement, were Rose of Cambridge and Lloyd of Oxford.

The direct causes of the Oxford Movement were many. There was the romantic renaissance, with the appeal of mediævalism in religion which sprang out of it. There was the thought of Coleridge, the new metaphysical apologist for the Faith, with his opposition to anti-religious rationalism—an opposition, however, which was not altogether free from the

¹ *The Oxford Movement*, pp. 10 f.

² Storr, pp. 79 ff.

irrationalism of Pascal and a tendency to sentimentalism, defects which also had their influence. There was an æsthetic revolt against the perfunctory and unedifying worship which prevailed in many quarters, and against the cant and smugness of comfortable and degenerate Evangelicalism, which caused many to regard themselves as "martyrs of disgust." Further, there was the formation in 1832 of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, an unmistakable indication of the spirit of the age, which filled the great majority of devout Christians with foreboding.

The Oxford movement had also a definitely political side, and has even been defined as "Toryism in ecclesiastical costume."¹ It was certainly political action on the part of the Whig Government which brought matters to a head. The Test and Corporation Acts had been repealed in 1828, the Roman Catholic Emancipation Act passed in 1829, and the Reform Bill in 1832. In 1833, "contrary to the suffrage of the Bishops of England and Ireland,"² the Whig Government introduced the Church Temporalities Bill, a foolish and shortsighted measure for the amalgamation of two Irish archbishoprics and eight bishoprics with the remaining twelve sees, and for various other purely financial expedients, which were deeply resented by the more pious English Churchmen and raised inevitable questions concerning the Church's relation to the State and its rights as a divine society existing amid temporal conditions.

Now that Dissent had ceased to exist for the State

¹ Cf. the attitude of Wordsworth discussed on p. 132.

² Advertisement of Keble's *Assize Sermon*.

as a civic disability, and the royal supremacy had become only "the form or mask of parliamentary power and control which in its turn was but the instrument of the hated Liberalism,"¹ the High Churchman became as convinced as the Puritan had been previously of the excellence of independency. "To save the Church, two things were necessary—to invest it with divine authority and all the rights flowing from it, and to set it strong in its authority and rights over against the apostate State on the one hand, and the rebellious reason on the other."² The cry of *National Apostasy* was raised by Keble in his sermon before the Judge of Assize at Oxford on the fourteenth of July, 1833, which is the date assigned by Newman as the beginning of the Oxford Movement.

The exact form which the assertion of the authority of the Church should take became clearer in the minds of its adherents as the movement gathered momentum. Newman has stated definitely the position which he took up and the propositions about which he was so confident.³ First there was the principle of dogma—"My battle," he says, "was with Liberalism; by Liberalism I mean the anti-dogmatic principle and its developments." Secondly, there was the truth of a certain definite religious teaching, based upon this foundation of dogma, viz. that there was a visible Church, with sacraments and rites which are the channels of invisible grace. Thirdly, there was the

¹ A. M. Fairbairn, *Catholicism, Roman and Anglican*, p. 287.

² *Ibid.*, p. 308.

³ *Apologia* (ed. 1880), pp. 48-58.

belief that the Church of England was the true Church, and the Roman Church the false.

There are three grave defects to notice in this position.¹ First, it had no adequate conception of development. Secondly, it did not adopt a sound historical method ; it appealed too much to the authority of antiquity and the middle ages and too little to the New Testament. Thirdly, it was too insular in its outlook. It may be argued that Newman had expressly admitted that there is development in the Church, but Newman's idea of development is quite unscientific, for it does not admit of even a liability to error. Again, although the Tractarians had a feeling for history, they allowed too arbitrary and uncritical a choice to govern their selection of the Fathers : in particular—and this is of great importance in dealing with the English Church—though the scholarly Tractarians did not confine their studies entirely to Western thought, their successors have shown an increasing tendency to live outside the great liberating stream of Platonic and Neo-Platonic thought which has had so marked an influence on English philosophy and theology. Lastly, in their zeal for tradition, they misconceived, far more than the Laudians or Nonjurors had done, the doctrinal basis of the Church of England. Instead of returning to the New Testament to secure the widest possible basis for their doctrine, they took it for granted that the only possible development was the narrower dogmatism of the Latin Fathers. Patristic authorities which were recognised by the Church of England at the Reformation as invaluable for the study of

¹ See Tulloch, pp. 112 ff., and Storr, pp. 255 ff.

primitive practice were used too exclusively by the Tractarians for doctrinal purposes. The situation was further complicated by a similar indiscriminate use of mediæval and seventeenth-century English Fathers, since it was assumed that their teaching likewise must be an infallible catholic development.

All this is apparent in the *Tracts for the Times*.¹ These Tracts, which gave full play to the genius of Newman, their originator, were reinforced by his remarkable afternoon sermons in the University Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Oxford. The Tract on Baptism, written by Pusey in 1835, lost Maurice with his Platonic mind, to the Tractarians. In 1838, the Bishop of Oxford, Richard Bagot, expressed his displeasure with the Tracts. This was a serious blow for Newman, whose conception of church authority had led him to say "My own Bishop was my Pope." In the next year he began to have doubts as to the Anglican order of succession. 'The 'catholicity' of Rome began to overshadow in his mind the 'apostolicity' of Anglicanism. The Church was One, *quod semper quod ubique quod ab omnibus*."² In Tract XC, he made an ingenious and disingenuous effort to impress the XXXIX Articles with his own conception of Catholicity,³ but this travesty caused a terrible commotion, and his bishop wounded him deeply by saying that he had made the Articles mean anything or nothing. The last blow was the foundation of the Jerusalem Bishopric in 1841, which was to be held alternately

¹ The editors were announced as Pusey, Keble, Newman, and Marriott.

² Tulloch, p. 115.

³ See pp. 29 f.

by an Anglican and a Lutheran nominated by the English and Prussian Governments respectively. This action of the civil power seemed to the Tractarians to strike at the very root of Church principles. Newman now resigned his position in the Oxford Movement, and gradually yielding himself to the influence of the Roman Church, was received into that Communion in October, 1845, being followed in the course of a year by some 150 clergymen and laymen of position.

In the time of deep distress and estrangement which followed, the other leaders of the party, Pusey, Keble and Marriott, held firm to the cause of the English Church.¹ "There are moods of mind in which logic, however cleverly cut and sharply pointed, proves powerless," and these three, most of all Keble, were constitutionally unable to conceive Christianity apart from the Anglican system. The party itself survived the heavy blow, but shunned for a time the slippery region of dogmatics, and devoted itself with greater zeal to the elaboration of ritual. So far as stress on outward worship is concerned, the early leaders of the Oxford Movement had been content simply to introduce a spirit of reverence, decency and order : doctrine was their sphere, not ritual.²

Of the younger school of Anglo-Catholics, as they are more generally and more fittingly known to-day, its leaders—Samuel Wilberforce, W. E. Gladstone, J. B. Mozley, R. W. Church, W. F. Hook, and C. Gore

¹ Church, *The Oxford Movement*, p. 396.

² Keble never wore vestments, and Pusey thought that ministers ought not to "deck their person." Newman celebrated at the north-end of the altar.

—have always felt themselves to be genuine Anglicans and incapable of becoming Roman Catholics. Newman had never imbibed the pure air of Anglicanism, and his Tractarianism was simply a transition from Evangelicalism to Romanism. His magnetic personality, his powers of leadership and moral force swept Tractarianism away from the only moorings which can give permanent security—those of *rational* supremacy. The saddened but wiser Tractarians betook themselves once more, after a little confused dilly-dallying, to the arduous task of commending their principles to Englishmen by appeals to reason and history. By this means Tractarianism steadily advanced from strength to strength against Evangelicalism, though it failed to receive the allegiance of the greatest minds in contemporary English life. Carlyle viewed it with contempt: Tennyson and Browning showed no sympathy with it: it gave no help to Clough or Matthew Arnold in their hours of doubt and days of gloom. Among theologians the prominent names are Robertson, Maurice, Hort, Westcott, Lightfoot, and Hatch, or again, more recently, Rashdall and Inge, none of whom have been disciples of the school.

In discussing the general character of Anglo-Catholicism since 1833, it is necessary first to summarise its meaning. This is contained in “the great idea of the Church in its visibility and authority—in its notes of succession, dogma, and sacrament.”² Its principal achievements were to revive “the grandeur and force of historical communion and church

¹ See Storr, p. 272, and Fairbairn, pp. 312–318.

² Tulloch, pp. 123 f.

life," and, no less, "the true place of beauty and art in worship," ideas which are capable, as history proves, of rapid abuse, unless interpenetrated by the light of reason, and used with purity of heart.¹ The leaders of the Oxford Movement were, however, learned men. "Their faith rested on something like a philosophy; they had at all events read Aristotle and Bishop Butler,"¹ and if the movement was avowedly reactionary, yet in its wider intellectual basis it contained the promise of possibilities in English Christianity which were denied to Evangelicalism.² Again, the appeal to the Church and not to the Bible was a step forward, since the Church, the "spirit-bearing body," is a living society, and belief in a visible Church must carry with it some hope that social life can be made Christian.

The supreme weakness of the Oxford Movement lay in what it prided itself was its chief strength; it flew in the face of the spirit of the age by denying a complete liberty of investigation: it was willing to allow the use of reason up to a point, but when the conclusions reached seemed unorthodox and dangerous, it was not willing, in Socratic fashion, to follow the argument *ὅπου ὁ λόγος ἄγει*, but cried off and protested the limitation of human faculties. This is still characteristic of the movement, and its results have been two-fold. Anglo-Catholics have been able in many controversial issues to adopt a more reasonable intel-

¹ H. Rashdall, *Christus in Ecclesia*, p. 8.

² A debt is due to the Evangelicals however, for the publications of the Parker Society and for the Zurich Letters, which were designed to counter-balance the voluminous patristic literature of the Tractarians.

lectual position than Evangelicals. Thus it is that they have been the readier of the two to admit Biblical criticism, for besides Scripture they have a greater authority to fall back on—that of the Church which existed first and which afterwards wrote and compiled the Bible.¹ But because they realised the power and the perils of reason, knowing that “wherever it takes possession it commands, recognising no tribunal above itself,” and because they also distrusted human nature, they were prepared when necessary to abandon their freedom of thought and to entrench themselves behind received and supposedly infallible dogmas. Thus, their attitude reproduced the disastrous mediæval breach between religion and science which even yet is not properly healed. The avowed intention of Newman was “to hurl back the aggressive force of the human intellect.” Such an attitude carries with it inevitably a spirit of scepticism which has revealed itself in various ways in the history of the party, as the following examples show.

(a) In the case of Newman himself “all that which is purely intellectual and systematic had never in his eyes more than an accessory value. His true life is entirely moral, and his successive doctrines are always, so to speak, a function of the conscience.”² Here, in what appears to be a strong position, a fundamental weakness may be detected. Newman attempted the

¹ See p. 6, however, concerning the weakness in this argument.

² H. Brémond, *The Mystery of Newman*, p. 344. This contention is supported by Dean Church: “What won his heart and enthusiasm was one thing; what justified itself to his intellect was another.”

impossible—the separation of the Rational Consciousness from the Moral Consciousness ;¹ “ he cut human nature into two.”² In this was reaped the harvest of the seeds of weakness in Coleridge’s thought. Coleridge, in his keen contention for a difference between reason and undertsanding, had divided reason into two classes,³ the practical reason as the fountain of ideas and the light of the conscience, and the speculative reason as the organ of formal or abstract truth ; but in stressing the superiority of the former, he had tended to equate human intuition with Divine inspiration.⁴ This was more pronounced in Newman, and it is hardly too strong to say that with him imagination *was* reason.⁵ There is a difference between this and Wordsworth’s dictum that imagination is reason in its most exalted mood, for the healthy intellectualism of Wordsworth led him to distinguish between imagination and fancy,⁶ whereas Newman’s sceptical intellectualism discredits whatever truth there may be in the principle, which he had learnt from Keble,⁷ that religious conviction ultimately rests upon the emotional grounds of faith and love. It is significant that Huxley guaranteed that he would extract from the books of the Cardinal a little manual of scepticism, and it is not therefore surprising to find that the Roman Catholic Modernists claim him as their father.⁸

¹ See p. 8.

² Storr, p. 284.

³ See pp. 138 f. Also Pfeiderer, p. 309.

⁴ Cf. Stoughton, vol. viii, p. 27.

⁵ Barry, *Newman*, p. 21. Quoted by Bremond, *op. cit.*, p. 84.

⁶ See W. R. Inge, *Outspoken Essays*, vol. ii, p. 21.

⁷ *Apologia* (ed. 1880), p. 19.

⁸ Cf. p. 198 n.

(b) The scepticism which lurked in the Oxford Movement was later made manifest by Dean Mansel's Bampton Lectures on *The Limits of Religious Thought*, which gained the widest popularity among Anglo-Catholics, but incurred the uncompromising opposition of F. D. Maurice. Mansel's philosophy amounts to a denial of what Inge, in true Platonic fashion, defines as the essence of Mysticism—that the completely real can be completely known—and it is noteworthy that his scepticism went hand in hand with a rejection of any intuitional theology such as Newman had held, thus indicating the fundamental pessimism of Catholicism as a whole concerning human nature. Mansel's thesis was that while God, or Reality, is unknown and unknowable, a supernatural revelation makes good the defect to man. This argument assumes that though man cannot know the real, he can know the supernatural, and so ends by conceding the very knowledge of reality which it began by denying. The supposed antithesis between natural and supernatural is thus seen to be false, and this puts the whole conception of revelation ¹ in a new light for those who are not blinded by *a priori* conceptions of a difference in kind between human nature and the Divine Nature.

(c) Of this latter class is representative the leader of Anglo-Catholicism to-day, Bishop Gore.² For him

¹ This so-called orthodox position is not only an unsatisfactory, but a quite unnecessary, defence of revelation, for it is found, as William James said (*Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 377), that "our testing of religion by practical common sense and the empirical method leave it in possession of its towering place in history. See pp. 99 ff. of this book.

² See his *Belief in God* and *Belief in Christ*.

it is sufficient that God, the Creator, has been pleased to make a communication *ab extra* to man, the creature. That the universe is part of the organic life of God is incomprehensible to him ; the word immanence, except as a name, means nothing to him ; he is confessedly a transcendentalist.

It is plain then that the original scepticism of the Oxford Movement still persists. Its claims for the authority of the Church are not irrational up to a point, given the mediæval ontological or Deistic idea of God,¹ but no final reconciliation with the claims of reason is possible. Reason must make its submission to the Church. Hence there is no assured future for Anglo-Catholicism as such, for the human spirit is now free, and as it realises itself will demand more and more that every claim to authority must always be justifying itself at the bar of reason.

In conclusion it is to be noted that Anglo-Catholicism at its best presents the highest synthesis of religious authorities achieved by any Church party, *qua* party, in the nineteenth century. It bows to the Church, to the Rational, Moral and Spiritual Consciousness, to the Bible—and in this order. But owing to the living and progressive nature of the internal authority—the human spirit—and the mediating position which alone is assigned to it between two static external authorities—the Church and the Bible—Anglo-Catholicism exists in a state of perpetual indecision, which is liable at any time to rend the party in twain. For the demand of the human spirit to occupy the primary position in the trio carries some of the party forward to the boundaries

¹ See pp. 65 ff. and 97 ff.

of Liberalism, or else causes reaction to a complete obscurantism in which reason is thoroughly crushed and relegated to a position behind even that accorded to the Bible—as in the Church of Rome. For example, the second of these two tendencies manifested itself in the very hour in which the Oxford Movement was born. It is safe to say that nothing was added to the distinctive English variation of Catholicism which was achieved by Laudianism.¹ English Catholicism had first been narrowed down by the restricted outlook of the post-Restoration High Churchmen,² and by the thoroughly unhistorical idea of the Church which one section at least of the Nonjurors had maintained. Instead of widening the issues to those of original Laudianism, Tractarianism narrowed them down still further, and adopted the high and catholic doctrine of the Church which had previously characterised Puritan theology.³ Hurrell Froude for example felt more reconciled to the Puritans, who had previously been his special aversion, when he found that they had maintained a *jus divinum* for Church polity! ⁴

The gravest defect of Modern Anglo-Catholicism lies in its most cherished ideal, that is, in its conception

¹ See p. 50. It may be urged that an original contribution was made by Tractarianism in the direction of religious warmth and emotion, but this cannot be admitted. Stress on personal religion was the chief characteristic of the Evangelical revival, and the place which it has since occupied in the English Church is due to the Evangelicals. This of course is not to deny the place which religious feeling occupies in Tractarianism (see p. 174).

² This was discussed on pp. 84 ff.

³ See pp. 44 ff.

⁴ Hunt, *Religious Thought in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 147.

of the Church, and of Church authority. For Anglo-Catholics can give no *practical working* content to the term "Church" when they speak of its authority. What or where is the Church the authority of which is so much stressed? It is of no practical value whatever to urge that "the undivided Church" is intended, for the undivided Church no longer exists. In point of fact, it is the Church of Rome which alone maintains the Anglo-Catholic doctrine of the Church as an integral part of its theology, and Rome expressly repudiates the claim of Anglo-Catholics to be part of the true Church. The legitimacy of the Anglo-Catholic interpretation of Anglican formularies is strongly denied by large sections of the Church of England, and on their own confession, there is at present no Bishop on the Bench who will identify himself with Anglo-Catholics even so far as to use the pronoun "we" in advocating recognition of their value to the Church. In the eyes of all but themselves, Anglo-Catholics appear as a body of eclectics, the only difference being that they choose from among Catholic instead of among Protestant principles.

The Anglo-Catholic ideal of the independency of the Church is magnificent in theory, but disastrous in practice. If the connection between the English Church and State were severed in order to achieve it, the Church would no longer be as wide as the nation, but would collapse into three or more wretched sects, one of which would soon join the Roman Communion. Anglo-Catholicism has already accentuated the existing divisions of Christendom. Reunion with non-episcopal communions will not receive even its con-

sideration unless the ministers of such communions are willing to submit to episcopal re-ordination. The more tolerant High Churchmen of the seventeenth century, who were ready to admit the Protestants of the continental churches to communion in the Church of England,¹ and denounced the errors of the Roman Church, have been replaced by High Churchmen who deny the catholicity of the continental churches and seek to establish points of agreement with Rome.²

One of the most significant examples of this process of narrowing down in English Catholicism is to be seen in the treatment of the doctrine of the Eucharist. The distinctive Anglican doctrine is defined by Jewel in the *Apology*. He insists with Origen, Ambrose, Augustine, Theodoret and other Catholic Fathers, that "the bread and wine in the Sacrament remain still the same they were before";³ at the same time he affirms, with the support of a similar catena of patristic authorities, that "Christ doth truly and presently give His own self in His Sacraments,"⁴ and that we "eat Him by faith, by understanding, and by the Spirit."⁴ In drawing out its conception of the Eucharistic sacrifice, the Church of England differs absolutely from the Church of Rome, for the former acknowledges but

¹ *E.g.* Archbishop Wake rejoiced that Lutherans communicated freely at English Altars. Not only this but until the Act of Uniformity of 1662 a number of continental Protestants, non-episcopally ordained, were admitted to English benefices. Even Bancroft did not scruple at this. One such foreigner became Dean of Durham.

² Storr, *op. cit.*, p. 270, and F. W. Cornish, *The English Church in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 68.

³ *Apology*, Part III (beginning).

⁴ *Apology*, Part II.

“one only Sacrifice” offered by Christ: it is the worshipper who now offers the sacrifice of himself, “soul and body,” in the strength of communion with his Lord.¹ This idea of sacrifice has often been confused by High Churchmen in their characteristic emphasis on the sacrificial, rather than on the representative, aspect of the priesthood. Passing over the obscure language of Bishop Andrewes, highly misleading at the best,² the desire for a more definite conception of a sacrificing priesthood manifested itself clearly among the High Churchmen of post-Restoration times. John Johnson, Vicar of Cranbrook, and the Nonjuring Bishop Brett considered that the Communion bread and wine were the pure offering which the priest offers for an everlasting sacrifice. The last stage in the narrowing down of the Anglican doctrine of the Eucharist has come if, and when, the Anglo-Catholic priest identifies his offering with that of the Roman Mass.³ This is the most definite departure from the doctrine of the Church of England.

Other examples of the obscurantist tendency in Anglo-Catholicism are to be seen in the opposition of Pusey and Liddon to Biblical criticism, the attack made on the *Lux Mundi* school by other members of the Tractarian party, and in the recent onslaught of the English Church Union on the Girton Conference of Modern Churchmen. The presence of this narrowing

¹ Cf. Augustine, *Ep.* 272. “Ye are the body of Christ and the members: the mystery of yourselves is placed on the Lord’s Table. . . .”

² Cf. C. Gore, *The Body of Christ*, p. 183.

³ Hunt, *Religious Thought in England*, vol. iii, p. 376.

and hardening influence to-day is testified by a prevalent reaction in the direction of mysticism.

The outstanding example of the broader spirit at work in Anglo-Catholicism was the attempt of the *Lux Mundi* group to liberalise Catholicism again, and to bring it in line with modern science and Biblical criticism. This was achieved with regard to the Old Testament, though most of its members are very conservative in respect of New Testament criticism, and will hardly touch the Creeds at all. In the grip of the emancipated human spirit some, like Dr. Sanday, have been carried into the ranks of English Modernism, and an increasing number of younger Anglo-Catholics are now following his example. Within the ranks of the party, efforts are made from time to time to secure the admission of a more liberal attitude, the most recent attempt being that of the Rev. A. E. J. Rawlinson in his paper, *Catholicism with Freedom*, read at the Birmingham Anglo-Catholic Congress. A storm of protest followed from the unprogressive orthodox.

Perhaps the one direction where modern Anglo-Catholicism as a whole has shown a spirit of practical liberalism has been in its efforts to break down the barriers of conservatism and aristocracy, and in its noble sacrifices to serve the cause of social service. But this is a distinct departure from the old Tractarianism, and has been effected under the influence of F. D. Maurice, T. H. Green, and Bishop Westcott ;¹ it is not an *original* contribution of Anglo-Catholicism.

¹ This is readily acknowledged by the late Henry Scott Holland (*The Philosophy of Faith and the Fourth Gospel*), who was himself perhaps the most humanising influence in modern Anglo-Catholicism.

182 THE THREE HISTORIC PARTIES REAPPEAR

It remains to add that in 1870, Anglo-Catholicism was confirmed in its right to form a true part of the English Church by the judgment of the Privy Council in the case of *Shepherd v. Bennett*. It was pointed out on this occasion that the Church of England requires greater conformity in ritual than in doctrine,¹ and since the charges made were not in respect of ceremonial, but of a vague and mystical teaching on the doctrine of the Real Presence of Christ in the Holy Communion, the defendant was allowed the right "to assert his opinions with the same freedom as the truth of them is denied by members of the same Church."²

III

MOVEMENTS OF RATIONAL THOUGHT IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Whereas the term Anglo-Catholic defines an ecclesiastical party in the Church of England, "well officered, well led, disciplined, organised, and inspired by a great idea," the term Broad Church is the name of a tendency rather than of a party,³ a tendency which ebbs and flows frequently in the same individual, and the history of which is therefore tedious, confusing, and difficult to trace, except in general outlines. The growth of Liberalism in religion during the nineteenth century was steady, and it possessed the moral support of the religious-minded laity to a larger extent than any other party within the Church of England. This was

¹ This is a point which bears strongly on present Prayer-Book revision proposals.

² A. J. Fitzroy, *Dogma and the Church of England*, p. 266.

³ Fairbairn, *op. cit.*, p. 322.

so much the case that in the edition of the *Apologia* printed in 1883, Newman added that Liberalism is now "scarcely a party; it is the educated lay world."¹

The chief links between the Liberalism of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are to be found in William Paley, Richard Watson, Edward Stanley, and Sydney Smith on the one hand; and in Herbert Marsh and Reginald Heber on the other. Paley died in 1805, leaving Watson, Bishop of Llandaff, the chief representative of the eighteenth-century type of Latitudinarian. The latter advocated the utmost freedom of opinion and liberty of enquiry on every subject,² an attitude of mind which was also reflected in Edward Stanley,³ later Bishop of Norwich, who carried on the tradition of the Feathers' Tavern Petition⁴ in the further unsuccessful attempt of 1842 to obtain a relaxation of the form of clerical subscription to the XXXIX Articles. The fame of Sydney Smith as a wit and publicist has eclipsed his more solid gifts as a clergyman who fought hard, in the face of much opposition, against religious prejudice and animosity.⁵ Marsh and Heber are included with these names because of their admissions in the sphere of Biblical criticism, otherwise they were firmly orthodox. Leaving aside however this miscellaneous group of earnest clergymen, together with a few others⁶—chiefly

¹ *Apologia*, p. 261.

² See Hunt, *History of Religious Thought*, vol. ii, p. 215.

³ Father of A. P. Stanley.

⁴ See p. III.

⁵ *E.g.* he exerted himself strenuously in the cause of Catholic emancipation.

⁶ See Stoughton, *History of Religion in England*, vol. vii, chap. iii.

schoolmasters and those interested in some special study, notably archæology—who may be considered as liberal-minded, an attempt may now be made to classify the outstanding figures who are usually regarded as having shaped the destinies of rational theology in England during the nineteenth century.

Four groups may be distinguished. (1) The Oriel group of the third decade of the century, whose main characteristic, except in the case of Whately, was their strong Church and State policy. (2) The number of those who were offended by the unsatisfactory condition of the Church of England, and who passed outside into Dissent or some form of scepticism. (3) A metaphysical group of great religious depth, which drew its chief inspiration from Coleridge and Erskine. (4) A group whose main interests were historical, literary, or scientific. Interesting and instructive parallels may be drawn between these groups and those represented in the movements of rational thought in the seventeenth century.¹

(1) *The Noetics*

The Oriel School consisted of Edward Copleston, Edward Hawkins, Richard Whately, Renn Dickson Hampden, and Thomas Arnold, the latter being the chief representative and, in a sense, the product of the school, as Copleston was its fountain-head. The original founders sprang from the more liberal wing of

¹ Similar opportunities of comparison and contrast were afforded between the High Churchmen of the nineteenth and seventeenth centuries.

the old High Church, or orthodox,¹ party, which had always stoutly defended the "Church and State" tradition and opposed Calvinism, thus resembling both in origin and outlook the Falkland school of Oxford scholars in the seventeenth century.²

In the early years of the nineteenth century there was no such epithet as "Broad Church,"³ and the Oriel group received the significant name of "Noetics," or "Intellectuals." Of these, only Whately and Arnold call for attention here: Hampden has already been mentioned.⁴ Force and originality were the chief characteristics of Whately. "He was a subverter of prejudice and commonplace," and "a whole cluster of beliefs came in this way under his destroying hand,"⁵ especially the Evangelical dogmatic scheme of salvation, as well as all that savoured of bigotry and party spirit.

At this time there were broached political and social, as well as theological, theories of a revolutionary kind, and toward these, quickened as they were by the rebellious and irreverent genius of Shelley, Whately was not favourably disposed. In 1826 *Letters of an Episcopalian* appeared,⁶ which developed the already existing idea of the Church as a purely spiritual and independent organisation.⁷ "From this book Cardinal Newman tells us that he learnt his theory of the

¹ See pp. 164 f.

² See pp. 52 ff.

³ See p. 206.

⁴ See p. 152.

⁵ Tulloch, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

⁶ The usual theory of Whately's authorship is accepted here.

⁷ See p. 165.

Church,"¹ but Whately's pupil, Arnold, seems to have received a different inspiration concerning the nature, constitution, and functions of the Church. There was one feature however common to both ; each represented a different aspect of the movement away from the individualism of Jean Jacques Rousseau, the 'Pantisocratic' schemes of the youthful romantic poets,² and English Evangelical theology, towards a more social scheme of salvation. But even in this step forward, Tractarianism did not escape from the pessimism that dogs its footsteps, and was content to establish a dichotomy consisting of the Church regarded as a purely spiritual society and the State regarded as a purely secular organisation. Arnold, though alive to the danger which besets "an extreme fondness" for our "dear mother the panther,"³ did not seek to escape from the narrow sacerdotalism which was involved in Tractarianism by belittling the idea of the Church, for this would have been to fall into the hands of the socialists and secularists.⁴ Instead, he compromised, and though his solution, contained in the pamphlet on *The Principles of Church Reform*—published in the same year which saw the beginning of the Oxford Movement—satisfied neither party, nevertheless it was simpler and broader than either in its basis, and

¹ Church, *The Oxford Movement*, p. 6.

² Pp. 131 f. Hegel was the first, in this reaction towards belief in the solidarity of humanity, to develop a doctrine of religious and political institutions as embodying the organic reason of the community.

³ The reference is to Dryden, *The Panther and the Hind* (i.e. the English Church and the Roman Church). See Letter LXIX in Stanley's *Life of Arnold*.

⁴ E.g. see Letters LI and LII in Stanley's *Life of Arnold*.

presented in its fundamental tenets "the ferment of a new progressive movement in the English Church."¹ These fundamental tenets may be described as the *unification of thought and life*.² Instead of narrowing the idea of the Church till it appears as a disestablished Christian sect in a secularist State, Arnold in the glow of his enthusiasm for humanity, visualised the Church as wide as the State itself. In one of his letters³ he writes that "the State, being the only power sovereign over human life, has for its legitimate object the happiness of its people—their highest happiness, not physical only, but intellectual and moral; in short the highest happiness of which it has a conception."⁴ Dissenters were to be taken into the Church's camp (if they would accept episcopal government without re-ordination) lest, in league with the anti-Christian party, they should destroy the Church. The clergy, moreover, were to be represented in both Houses of Parliament.

But Arnold's attempt to wed the compactness of the ancient Commonwealths⁵ to the complex conditions of modern society led to consequences with which his idealism was scarcely designed to deal. While he would have loved a church as broad and varied as the English people, he was determined not to compromise the distinction between Christian and

¹ Pfeleiderer, p. 365.

² Cf. p. 210.

³ No. LXXVI.

⁴ The resemblance to Coleridge's idea of the Church is plain, though cf. p. 143. For acknowledgments of his debts to Coleridge see Letters LXXXIX and CCIV.

⁵ History and politics, rather than theology, were Arnold's true spheres of learning. He became Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford.

non-Christian, that is, to use his own definition, between those who do, and those who do not, "truly love and fear Christ."¹ Since the Church was to be national as well as Christian, he thought that Jews and Roman Catholics should only be allowed to dwell in the land as aliens. But his chief difficulty with regard to Church Reform seems to have been over the Quakers and the Unitarians, who did not *seem* to be Christians. On the whole, however, it is true to say that Arnold very rightly wished to leave every man to decide for himself, at the court of his own conscience, whether he were a Christian or not.² Under Arnold's influence, religious Liberalism in England took a fresh start. He dominated and inspired it by that intense ethical passion which is the characteristic mark of the prophet. His work was eclipsed for the time being in the stir caused by the birth of the Oxford Movement, but the final defeat and conclusion of the first stage of that movement in 1845 marked the birthday of the modern Liberalism of Oxford which was soon to astonish old-fashioned Heads of Houses with new and deep forms of doubt more audacious even than Tractarianism.³

(2) *The Sceptical Reaction*

The collapse of the great Church revival known as the Oxford Movement, the avowed intention of which was "to hurl back the aggressive force of the human

¹ Letter LVIII.

² Dr. Martineau (Introduction to Tayler's *Religious Life*, p. 12) does not seem to be fair in saying that Arnold wished to lop off and place in the ξένοι of foreign faiths the Unitarians who deemed themselves Christians.

³ Church, *op. cit.*, p. 393.

intellect,"¹ had serious consequences for the Church of England, for it caused the human spirit, in its steady march forward, to incline more and more to scepticism in regard to Christianity. On every side, the movements of rational thought found themselves in conflict and out of sympathy with the bulk of the Church's teachers and officers. Except for a handful of Liberals, few practising Churchmen were prepared seriously to face the situation which literary and historical criticism was creating concerning the Bible: the same blind obstinacy prevailed with regard to the pronouncements of natural science.² Further impulse to scepticism was given by the materialistic and utilitarian philosophy elaborated by the Mills and their pupils, and completed before 1845-6.³

During the sceptical reaction before the middle of the century, some, like J. A. Froude, eventually found a refuge in Carlylism; others found an ethical idealism the only possible creed; "the poems of Clough, who at this time broke away from Oxford and resigned his fellowship; the *Phases of Faith* of Francis Newman⁴ (1849), who then parted with his early Evangelicalism; the struggles after a higher belief, which meet us in the lives of Kingsley and F. W. Robertson;—all testify to the sceptical weariness which in these years overtook many minds of the younger generation. . . . It was in the same years that John Sterling's faith disappeared; and Matthew Arnold's first poems, with

¹ See pp. 167, 173.

² The exceptions are discussed on pp. 203 f.

³ The date of G. N. Lewes' *Biographical History of Philosophy*.

⁴ The brilliant brother of John Henry Newman.

all their divine despair, although not published till a later date (1853), were born of the same time of spiritual darkness, when the sun of faith went down on so many hearts.”¹ These literary writers were all men of religious insight, but there were others of harder intellect and little or no knowledge of the spiritual side of Christianity who were involved in the same eclipse. J. S. Mill² had inherited from his father a deterministic creed which was also stamped upon George Grote and George Henry Lewes. The influence of these reinforced the old Benthamite utilitarianism based on the greatest happiness principle. Jeremy Bentham himself had hated Christianity from the time when he felt his Moral Consciousness had been violated by the subscription to the XXXIX Articles which had been required of him at Oxford.³ Other disintegrating influences in this negative movement were the Hennells and Brays, Unitarians, under whose influence George Eliot began to abandon her Evangelical faith in 1840. She accepted the destructive German criticism, and by 1846 had translated into English both Strauss’ *Leben Jesu* and Feuerbach’s *Essence of Christianity*; but it was not till after 1855, and her conjunction with such fellow-workers as Herbert Spencer and G. H. Lewes, that her unbelief assumed a definite form.⁴ George Eliot thus really belongs to the later sceptical movement of the century when the conflict between theology and science became more pronounced.

¹ Tulloch, p. 256.

² See p. 146.

³ See Storr, chap. xix, for a useful account of the negative reaction between the years 1840-55.

⁴ Tulloch, p. 256.

The publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species* in 1859 may be said to mark the beginning of the final assault of science upon theology. This struggle occasioned the movement of a large number of Liberals outside the Church of England: once again the Rational and Moral Consciousness revolted impatiently against the claims of Spiritual Experience on the one hand, and of the Church and Bible on the other, to be considered as valid religious authorities. Neither the evident liberalism of the *Essays and Reviews* judgment, nor the Clerical Subscription Amendment Act of 1865, was sufficient to check the scepticism of some, or quiet the conscience of others. A species of æsthetic idealism was adopted by Sir John Seeley:¹ some, like Stopford Brooke, became pure individualists with a bias towards Unitarianism; Voysey founded a sect of his own. During the remainder of the century the questions broached were of the most fundamental kind: the possibility of miracle; the place of prayer in a system of universal law; the unlikelihood of the ultimate value or even the reality of the so-called drama of Redemption played on this insignificant planet; the tentativeness of any divine theory of the world. The Mills were succeeded by Spencer, who popularised a combination of Positivism in science with Agnosticism in religion and philosophy.² The late Frederic Harrison, who became the leader of the English Positivists, defined it as a definite system of religious belief, "a reorganisation of life, at once intellectual, moral and social, by faith in our Common Humanity." This position may perhaps

¹ The author of *Ecce Homo*.

² See p. 145.

more correctly be described as one which tended sometimes to a kind of evolutionary idealism but mostly to fatalism and materialism. Huxley, with whom the name Agnosticism originated, repudiated all connection with Comte and the English Positivists, and refused to be called a materialist. Materialism finally obtained far-reaching success under the propaganda of the Rationalist Press. The fight became a matter of life and death for religion in the old sense of the word. On the side of Christian Theism, the principal names were T. H. Green, John and Edward Caird, and Dr. Martineau, and these mark the reaction to a spiritual philosophy. It is significant that none of these were clergymen of the Church of England.

The struggle has ended in a more chastened demeanour towards religion on the part of science, due chiefly to the exposure of the shallowness of the mechanical view of the universe¹ by Samuel Butler, James Ward, F. H. Bradley and A. J. Balfour. On the other hand the struggle brought about the death of the old theology. Efforts were made by the Broad Church party, noticeably in Archbishop Temple's *Bampton Lectures of 1884* and by the *Lux Mundi* School in their joint volume of 1889, to modify theological doctrines to meet the position which science had reached, but it seems to be becoming plainer that the real reconciliation of theology and science can only take place in the sphere of psychology.² Here the

¹ See pp. 146, 150.

² Cf. Amiel: "What our age needs is a translation of Christianity from the domain of history to the domain of psychology"; and Archbishop Temple: "Our theology has

old problems of revelation, miracle, and prayer are simplified, for the world of science becomes more real and less of an abstraction, and science itself becomes more spiritual; ¹ while theology loses its dogmatism and over-exclusive insistence on disputable history.

(3) *F. D. Maurice and his School*

Just as the members of the Falkland School, strong in their allegiance to Church and State, were followed by the Cambridge Platonists who developed a rational theology on a basis of Platonism and mystical experience during a time of philosophic and scientific scepticism, ² so, in a similar manner, was the school of Arnold followed by that of Frederick Denison Maurice in an atmosphere of fatalism, materialism, and utilitarianism. The schools of Christian Platonism and mysticism always resemble each other in a striking degree, so that it will be unnecessary to repeat here what has already been said at length in dealing with the Cambridge Platonists and Samuel Taylor Coleridge. The same notes of religious depth, breadth, and intensity, the same constructive note of Christian apologetic, the same errors of divine excess, and the same deficiencies in critical and historical spirit mark them all.

In the group among which Maurice is the outstanding figure and the chief source of inspiration, are Julius

been cast in a scholastic mould, *i.e.* based on Logic. We are in need of and we are being gradually forced into a theology based on psychology. The transition, I fear, will not be without much pain: but nothing can prevent it."

¹ See p. 150.

² See pp. 67, 70.

Charles Hare, Charles Kingsley, and Frederick W. Robertson. Although these differ considerably from each other they are grouped together under the precedent afforded by the Cambridge Platonists; the first three only were members of Cambridge University, and it is not surprising to find that they are the three with the closest affinities.

Hare, an enthusiastic and cultured scholar, is especially noteworthy for his sermons¹ and general emphasis on a profound subject of which it is often said that the Church has been almost silent since St. Luke wrote the *Acts of the Apostles*,² namely, the work of the Holy Spirit. As a result of this emphasis he had a clear grasp of the principle of development and taught that theology is as progressive as science.³ He was a great admirer of Luther and an avowed disciple of Wordsworth and Coleridge.

Hare must be regarded as the secondary source from which Maurice breathed in the metaphysical atmosphere of Coleridge. Also, there existed in Cambridge, between 1820 and 1830, a small Platonist club whose members called themselves "The Apostles," who may be considered as walking in the steps of the Cambridge Latitudinarians of the seventeenth century.⁴ No doubt the members of this club would exercise some influence on the youthful and receptive Maurice, though it is wiser to regard the distinctive Platonic modification which he gave to Coleridge's system as

¹ E.g. *The Mission of the Comforter*.

² Cf. pp. 66 f.

³ Cf. p. 147³.

⁴ Stoughton, vol. vii, pp. 168 and 179.

due to the constitution of his own mind rather than to any outside influence.

Two things combined to make Maurice great—his “Platonising Realism and his Johannine Genius.” The former always makes for orthodoxy, while the latter, possessing in it the seeds of progress, enables its possessor to make the necessary concessions to new thought from time to time.¹ Maurice most emphatically was not a party man: the desire for unity, he says, haunted him all his life through.² When, as a result of his restless endeavours to mediate between High Churchmen and Low Churchmen, he was dubbed a Broad Churchman, his grief was boundless, for it seemed to him that one more sect had come into existence. Nevertheless, though none has ever been less of a sectarian, Maurice frequently showed a most dogmatic spirit, which was born, it would seem, of that artistic sense which relies overmuch on the intuitive perception of values. The claims of such men for their own value judgments often seem irrational to more logical minds, but reason is not an isolated faculty; it is blended inextricably with the working of the feelings, affections, and emotions. In actual experience it is true to say that the man of refinement and education who relies on these intuitive value judgments is found to be right at least as often as the man who insists on “the purely intellectual discernment of logical cogency.”³ The one may make errors of judgment but the other is always leaving out of account

¹ This is exemplified to-day in the Dean of St. Paul's.

² *Life of Maurice* by his son, p. 41.

³ Streeter and Appasamy, *The Sadhu*, p. 234.

facts of which he is not conscious. Moreover the leaps in the dark which the former is obliged to make are necessary for his inspiration, and it is by inspiration and the personal magnetism that is born of it, that this man works. To be more critical, however, he is greatly in danger of the "tyranny of the hypothesis." His convictions are so strong that he frequently mistakes an hypothesis for an incontrovertible fact; his confidence is really engendered by a purposive will which under stimulus and exhilaration has learnt to despise the possibilities of failure. The same propositions without the same optimism are often powerless.

All this would seem to be true of Maurice. He himself said that "if we ignore facts we change substances for suppositions."¹ On the other hand one of his students states that never in his life did he attend "history lectures which dealt so little with facts."² The truth is that different minds differ as to what are facts. For Maurice they were spiritual propositions, abstractions which his Platonism revered as realities,³ and as such they gripped his mind and vitalised his actions. Although personally he does not seem to have much sympathy with William Law (because "he lived at a period when the importance of the national and church principles were little felt"⁴), yet Maurice's dominant idea, in Law's own phrase, was "the Life of God in the Soul." Nothing was so clear to him as his spiritual experience: after the

¹ *Life*, vol. i, p. 203.

² *Life*, vol. i, p. 213.

³ Cf. Tulloch, p. 277.

⁴ *Life*, vol. i, p. 203.

fashion of his Lord and Master he even spent whole nights in prayer.

Here it is instructive to consider the relation of Maurice to Newman. For Newman there were two, and two only, supreme and luminous self-evident beings, himself and his Creator. But although Newman had felt that religious conviction ultimately rests upon the emotional grounds of faith and love,¹ yet at this point his faith in human goodness failed him : he restricted the validity of spiritual experience to the assurance of the individual alone,² abjured the claims of internal authority, and fell back for his rational proof of the truth of Christianity on the external authority of the Church of Rome. In the last section, this disharmony between the heart and the head was traced back to a weakness in Coleridge's thought. It is to be found again in Maurice, though in a different form, and was the source of all his inconsistencies. The place of Maurice in the evolution of the Mystical Consciousness is greater than his place in the evolution of the Rational Consciousness. His powers of discursive reasoning, though great, were not able clearly to translate his intuitions. "He does not fail to convey what he thinks, but what he thinks is often vague and cloudy."³ Thus, the charge of "mistiness" and "obscurity," which was often brought against him, contains considerable truth, and, possibly as a consequence, no man was ever more misunderstood than Frederick Denison Maurice. If,

¹ See p. 174.

² See pp. 66, 176.

³ Stoughton, vol. viii, p. 220.

however, his inconsistencies caused pain to individuals, they were not so tragic as Newman's avowed dualism.¹ If for example Maurice felt the need of some authoritative ecclesiastical tradition, he did not brand it as a supernatural revelation incomprehensible to reason : if he was going to accept the three Creeds, as he did, he must find for them a rational justification,² though the marvellous subtlety and profound seriousness with which he accomplished this may now occasion an amused, yet always reverent, smile. Revelation for Maurice might be regarded as super-rational but it must not fly against the nature of man's constitution. He asserted that the spiritual life is part of an eternal order, so that spiritual experience does not merely suffice for the assurance of the individual, as it does in the view of Newman, but is essential and trustworthy data for a rational investigation and understanding of the world process.

Thus the sympathy which he at first felt with the Oxford Movement he soon found to be superficial : the crude realism of Pusey's Tract on Baptism shocked his religious sensitiveness. Afterwards, says his son,³ he always spoke of Tractarianism " with a kind of shudder, as it were, of an escape from a charmed

¹ *E.g.* Maurice caused pain to his Unitarian father by his re-baptism. But Newman caused a temporary set-back to the evolution of the Rational Consciousness, though since his surrender to Rome was carried out at the command of his Moral Consciousness it carried with it the possibility of ultimate recovery. It is not by chance that Newman is regarded as the father of Continental Modernism. See p. 174.

² Cf. his note on the Athanasian Creed in *Theological Essays*.

³ *Life*, vol. i, p. 186.

dungeon.” His second great controversy—the one with Mansel,¹ which called attention to the question, “What is revelation?”—may perhaps be regarded as “the most significant one in the whole history of the Church since Athanasius stood up to resist the Arians on a similar, if not the same identical, issue.”² Maurice, unlike Mansel, believed that the real can be known by man because there is a community of nature between God, or Reality, and man. “The true, sinless root of Humanity” is revealed in the Incarnation: “the human had been taken up into the Divine and so redeemed from weakness: humanity in the fullness of time had been once expressed in what may be called Divine terms.”³

But if the Incarnation is the revelation of man’s true place in the world, if it reveals, as Maurice taught, not a fallen but a redeemed world,⁴ it followed also that any system of theology was untrue “which started from the fallen nature of man, and brought in redemption as a subsequent remedy for the disorder.”⁵ Thus Maurice not only fell foul of high and irrational authoritarian doctrines, but also of the crude theology of blood and hell-fire with which the Evangelicals⁶ unsuccessfully sought to salvage souls from science. But only the theology of this man, who was regarded by many as a “half-fanatical mystic,” who was deprived

¹ See pp. 175 f.; also the discussion of revelation on pp. 100 ff.

² A. V. G. Allen, *op. cit.*, p. 423.

³ H. R. Haweis, *In Memoriam* Sermon on Maurice’s death.

⁴ *Theological Essays*, p. 126.

⁵ Storr, *op. cit.*, p. 344.

⁶ Rigg and Candlish were his chief critics.

of his Professorship at King's College because of his spiritual interpretation of the word "eternal," but who was regarded by his disciples as "the last of the prophets," was found not wanting in the face of the demands of scientific and sceptical thought. It could concede the whole evolutionary conception and even thrive thereon, and it could correct, in virtue of its doctrine of Divine immanence, the tendency to pantheism which had set in.¹

Though great attention has been paid to his works, Maurice can hardly be said to have founded a theological school in the Church of England. He takes a prominent place in the long list of Christian thinkers whose philosophy is based on the Platonic tradition. "His valuable services in reference to Divine truth are that he insisted, with singular emphasis, on the Personality and Fatherly Love of God, the Divinity of Christ, the order which lies at the foundation of all things, and the self-sacrificing spirit of the Gospel."² He can hardly be said to have rationalised theology, though his influence was such as to make its rationalisation possible without loss of spiritual values. If he is to be classed as a Broad Churchman, it is against his own will, but because of the width of his heart; because, while every religious party within or without the Church of England denounced him, he yet taught the distinctive spiritual truths of all.³

¹ Maurice's passionate belief on the Incarnation was itself charged with being vague and pantheistic, but on this central matter, he was the very opposite of "misty" or "obscure."

² Stoughton, vol. viii, p. 221.

³ Cf. H. R. Haweis, *In Memoriam* sermon.

His chief disciples have been Charles Kingsley—whose emotional and moral appeals were much more popular than Maurice's theologising style—Professor A. J. Hort, and Bishop Westcott, all of whom carried on the practical work of Christian Socialism. Another great name was that of Alexander V. G. Allen, Professor in the Episcopal Theological School in Cambridge, U.S.A., whose valuable books are too little known.

Although Maurice has been selected for special mention among this group of Christian apologists, a no less important name is that of Frederick William Robertson. The place of Kingsley is between these two. Robertson had been educated in quite a different school from Maurice, having been brought up as an Evangelical, and passing, after terrible conflict in his sensitive and emotional nature, to a fearless but reverent Liberalism.¹ Maurice with true prophetic insight, recognised Robertson's life and faith as complementary to his own.² This is a true estimate. Robertson had the clearer intellect and more acute dialectical powers, and he did not express himself in the esoteric, religioso-metaphysical language which flowed from Maurice in his inspired moments. The two drew nearest together in their practical efforts for the good of working men,³ and along with Kingsley were involved in a common denunciation on this account in 1851.⁴ In spite of his intellectual gifts Robertson was not primarily a theologian, though he would

¹ *Life and Letters*, by Stopford Brooke, vol. ii, p. 250.

² *Life of Maurice*, vol. ii, p. 515.

³ They were not however confederate.

⁴ *Life and Letters of Robertson*, vol. ii, p. 2.

undoubtedly have occupied an outstanding position as such had he lived to be older than thirty-seven, and had found occasion to write the theological works which he had proposed to himself.¹ As it is, however, he stands out principally as a preacher and a teacher, and his characteristics in this capacity, in addition to his expansive intellectual faculty, are summed up by Principal Tulloch as spiritual intensity and sincerity and love of truth.

But it is his understanding of the nature of religious authority that calls for special mention in this book. "The highest truths," he maintained, "rest ultimately, not upon the authority of the Bible or of the Church, but upon the witness of the Spirit of God in the human heart."² He possessed the anti-dogmatic spirit, but yet saw the need of dogmas so far as they are spiritual, and not merely intellectual, dogmas. Thus he anticipated the dictum of Auguste Sabatier that the vital principles should be disengaged from traditional dogmas.³

(4) *The Broad Churchmen*

In passing from the last group of thinkers to those whose interests were mainly scientific, historical, and critical, we return once more to the evolution of the Rational Consciousness proper. The work of this group was in the direction of mental breadth rather

¹ Pfleiderer, *op. cit.*, p. 386, and *Life*, vol. ii, p. 251.

² Pfleiderer, p. 385.

³ Cp. Robertson's sermon on *The Glory of the Virgin Mother*.

than religious depth, and its members may be divided roughly into two classes, those whose interest was almost exclusively in science, and those whose interest was also in Biblical criticism and the reformation of theology.

In the first and earlier class, the two most important names are Robert Fellowes (1771-1847) and William Whewell (1795-1866). Fellowes was an unbeneficed clergyman and consequently seemed to feel increasingly free in expressing his unorthodox opinions. In his book *The Religion of the Universe* (1836), he embraced whole-heartedly the new knowledge that had come to hand, stating that religion and science were identical according to his notions, and applying to the Creeds the idea of evolution which already was in the air.¹ Whewell, Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, was a distinguished member of the British Association and became its President in 1841. He attacked no dogmas and instituted no Church reforms. He set an example, however, of a fearless devotion to truth and wasted no time on feeble efforts at harmonising science with orthodox theology.² His principal book was the *History of the Inductive Sciences* (1837), the tone and purpose of which may perhaps best be judged by the fact that in 1845 he published extracts from it, under the title of *Indications of the Creator*, as a fresh contribution to natural theology. Grateful recognition of the powerful influence of the clergy in the promotion of science at the period of the formation of the British Association in 1831 has recently been

¹ See p. 147³.

² A. I. Fitzroy, *Dogma and the Church of England*, p. 100.

made by the Secretary to the Association.¹ The names of Whewell, Sedgwick, Buckland, and Harcourt are selected for special mention, and attention is drawn to the intimacy then existing between scientific and ecclesiastical interests which is revealed by the fact that out of a total of forty-one names in the lists of the first sub-committees, twelve were clergymen of the Church of England. Regret is expressed at the marked decrease in the proportion since the middle of the nineteenth century, there having been only a few brilliant exceptions, among whom Canon E. W. Barnes of Westminster is the last. In the year 1855 the Parliamentary Committee of the Association, in a report on possible Government measures for the improvement of the position of science, suggested that promotions in the Church might be made for scientific acquirements as well as for literary merit ; which would suggest that already the clergy were being discouraged and compelled to take sides against science. A controversy between orthodoxy and geology had taken place over Buckland's *Bridgewater Treatise* during the years 1833 to 1844,² and a more violent one followed on the question of biology in 1859-60, during both of which the principal orthodox protagonists, the Dean of York³ and the Bishop of Oxford⁴ respectively, betrayed almost incredible ignorance.

The year 1855 marked a new outbreak of religious Liberalism in the appearance of commentaries on the

¹ O. J. R. Howarth, *A Retrospect*, 1831-1921, pp. 57 f. and 79.

² See pp. 148 f.

³ William Cockburn.

⁴ Samuel Wilberforce.

Pauline Epistles by Jowett and Stanley. On the one hand, these form a link with the "Noetics," for Stanley was the chief pupil of Dr. Arnold, and during the rest of the century those who were definitely known as Broad Churchmen were chiefly engaged in Biblical criticism. On the other hand, the purely literary and historical outlook of Stanley and Jowett was blended in 1860 with that of the scientific Liberals, a junction which is marked by *Essays and Reviews*.¹ This volume however added nothing fresh to the *distinctive* marks of Liberalism as shown in Arnold—or even in Lord Falkland; it represented the purely intellectual formulations and the negative influence of the recently acquired knowledge; but it did not narrow down the issues of the Broad Church Party as Tractarianism had done those of the High Church Party.

The subsequent progress of Biblical criticism during the century was outlined in the last chapter and need not be reviewed again here. The judgments of the Privy Council in the *Essays and Reviews* and Colenso controversies relieved anxiety as to the rights of the clergy as responsible students, and in 1865

¹ There was never a great deal of sympathy between these scientific and critical groups, and the metaphysical group of Maurice. Hare numbered Whewell among his fellow students, and was of course closely associated with Thirlwall (see p. 151), who is usually regarded as belonging to the outer fringe of the "Noetics." But even Thirlwall cannot be reckoned as an advanced Biblical critic. Maurice and Arnold found common ground in the ever-reconciling sphere of practical religion. For example, in 1839 the former wrote: "I would give anything to be able to organise a society for drawing public attention to the state of the labouring classes throughout the kingdom" (*Life*, vol. ii, Letter CCLV).

the form of subscription was altered, an act of ecclesiastical statesmanship, due to the influence of Stanley,¹ which rendered the position of the Liberal clergy more tenable.

The name of Stanley, above all who should find a place in this section, must be singled out for special mention as the true type of Broad Churchman. It was probably due to him that the name first came into use.² The Church of England, he wrote, was "by the very condition of its being, neither High nor Low, but Broad," an ideal which he steadily maintained before him all his life. The Deanery of Westminster, while occupied by him, has been compared by a grateful Unitarian, Dr. Martineau, to Great Tew, where Stanley's prototype Lord Falkland practised the same Latitudinarian principles in days when the situation was fortunately rendered less acute by the "dissidence of Dissent." The dominating principle of Stanley's life and work was to break down any separation between religion and morality, "the one great corruption to which all religion is exposed."³ It was this which led him to refuse to restrict belief to reasoned thought, and to grant unreservedly the name of Christian to all who live the life of Christ, "even if practised without naming His Name."⁴ He deplored the lack of "moral complexion" and the absence of "moral

¹ Stanley's father, the Bishop of Norwich, failed in his attempt to secure this in 1842.

² See Tulloch, p. 260, though contrast H. R. Haweis (*In Memoriam* sermon on F. D. Maurice) for an account which attributes the first application of the term to Maurice.

³ *The Bible, its Form and Substance*, p. 59.

⁴ *Christian Institutions*, pp. 111 f.

descriptions of the Divinity" in Christian creeds and confessions,¹ yet at the same time he held closely to the doctrine of the Trinity, translating its metaphysical speculations into an ethical and practical conception of God as manifested in creation, in history, and in the individual soul.² It is impossible to give more specimens of Stanley's teaching. "Every page of his many books teems with golden thoughts, happy illustrations, fervent piety."³

The principal representatives of the Broad Church movement since Stanley's death have been Dr. Momerie, who was deprived of his Professorship at King's College, London, H. R. Haweis, T. Hughes of the fame of *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, Bishop Moorhouse of Melbourne and Manchester, Bishop Fraser of Manchester, Professor Edwin Hatch of Oxford, Bishop Boyd-Carpenter of Ripon,⁴ and W. H. Fremantle, Dean of Ripon.⁴ In the wake of the movement there has grown up the school of historical criticism which is represented chiefly by the Cambridge trio, Westcott, Lightfoot, and Hort.⁵ It must be remembered, however, that a large number of liberal-minded Churchmen moved outside the Church during the latter part of the century, as described in the second division of this section, and those who were left tended to lose the distinctive characteristics of the Broad Church.

¹ *Essays on Church and State*, p. 393.

² Cf. *Christian Institutions*, pp. 278 f.

³ A. I. Fitzroy, *op. cit.*, p. 248.

⁴ As exemplified especially in his *Bampton Lectures*.

⁵ Tulloch, p. 330.

IV

(I) RECONSTRUCTIONS OF THE THREE HISTORIC PARTIES

(2) MODERNISM *v.* TRADITIONALISM

The characteristics of the three historic church parties have now been described as they reappeared in the setting of the nineteenth century. Each was bound to affect the others to some extent, and as a result of such interaction certain reconstructions took place.

We have seen that under the pressure of liberal thought the Tractarians became divided into two groups, who may be called Anglo-Catholics and Liberal Catholics respectively.

In the same way it has been shown how there came to be Evangelicals and Liberal Evangelicals.

There was also established, soon after the middle of the century, another party known as "Central," or "Good," or "Safe," Churchmen, among whom the chief names have been Samuel Wilberforce, Bishop of Oxford, W. F. Hook, Vicar of Leeds and Dean of Chichester, and Archbishop Benson. These have been distinguished for their practical energy and good sense rather than for their intellectual contribution to Church doctrine. As zealous organisers and parish priests, they have sought to effect a working *via media* between Tractarianism and Evangelicalism, and have been affected by Liberalism only in so far as they have been compelled by their ideals of religious toleration. The Lambeth Conferences, which began in 1867, have done much towards creating and consolidating the party in the English Church.

The Broad Church party, in its turn, has been affected by the Tractarians and Evangelicals. In 1898, the Churchmen's Union was formed "for the advancement of liberal religious thought." Besides the descendants of the old Broad Churchmen, this consisted at first very largely of Liberal Evangelicals, the Low Church party having felt the shock of Biblical criticism more quickly than the High Church party. But of late an increasing number of Liberal Catholics have enrolled themselves in its ranks. Partly as a result of these infiltrations, and partly as the natural outcome of the new idealism in philosophy and the retractions of science, a change has come over Liberal thought in the direction of a less negative and less exclusively individualistic outlook. The closer study of history has inspired a new reverence for the authority of the Church: a more enlightened criticism has learnt to distinguish between the wheat and the chaff in the Biblical records; science has taught man to understand his place in the world and to appreciate his evolution in religion; psychology has made possible the re-interpretation of theology and has largely changed the conception of religious authority.

As a result of all these modifications a general redistribution of the various Church parties appears to be taking place in the twentieth century which promises at no distant date to replace them by two main parties which may be described as Traditionalist and Modernist respectively. In the former party, the rigid descendants of the Evangelicals and Tractarians are to be found in a somewhat nervous alliance brought

about by fear of a common enemy. In the latter party which is characterised by a forward outlook, are to be found the descendants of the old Broad Church party, immensely strengthened by a Liberal Evangelical group and a Liberal Catholic group, who while holding fast to the liturgical ideals of their Evangelical and Tractarian predecessors have yet felt compelled, under the pressure of modern historical criticism and the modern scientific outlook, to join hands in an attempt to reconstruct theology and set forth a religious representation of the great fundamental doctrines of the Christian Faith. Among these, the outstanding problem is the Christological one, to which doctrinal issue all religious controversies ultimately lead, and with which the Girton Conference of Modern Churchmen attempted to deal in 1922. But the constructive work of the Modernists is at present less than half done, and adequate criticism of their theological conclusions may not justly or securely be undertaken. Their methods and ideals however may be briefly outlined.¹

Modernism stands primarily for the unification of thought and life. "It is the same mind that has to think of things secular and of things sacred, and the processes of thinking for both are the same." Moreover, the universe is all of a piece and Christianity is all of a piece with the universe.

Again, Modernism is a gospel of reconciliation. "It seeks to reconcile faith and fact ; to reconcile the Church's doctrine with the new outlook which modern research in science, history, literature, and psychology

¹ See Dr. Sanday's *Nunc Dimittis, The Position of Liberal Theology*.

has brought about. It promises also to achieve a much to be desired synthesis between Catholicism and Protestantism.”¹

The Modernist does not start, and cannot start, from submission to external authority of any kind. He recognises the Creeds as the “ great historical landmarks of continuity,” and the Bible as the supreme textbook of religious experience; he has the utmost veneration for the Church and abhors the spirit of schism; but whereas the cry of “ The Church in danger ” sounds like a clarion call in the ears of the High Churchman, and the cry of “ The Bible in danger ” in the ears of the Low Churchman, stirring their loyalty and devotion, the cry of “ The Truth in danger ” is a similar stir to the enthusiasm of the Modernist. Essentially then, Modernism is to be regarded as an orientation, an outlook.

It remains to add that while English Modernism is clearly to be distinguished from Roman Catholic Modernism, nevertheless the issue of the present conflict of ideals in the English Church must be dependent to some extent upon the result of the similar conflict which is going on in the Roman Church and in all the chief Nonconformist Communions.

¹ H. D. A. Major.

PART III

CONCLUSION

CHAPTER VIII

SOME PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS OF THE EXISTING SITUATION

I

THE REVERSAL IN THE ORDER OF PRIORITY OF RELIGIOUS AUTHORITIES NOW COMPLETED

IN the course of this book attention has frequently been directed to the gradual but complete reversal which has been taking place in the order in which the various religious authorities were held at the time of the Reformation Settlement of the Church of England. Whereas the Reformation was a rational and moral revolt, which disguised itself in the form of the assertion of the external authority of the Bible against that of the Church, and only recognised very dimly the place of the authority of the Spiritual Consciousness, the conflicts which have since occurred within the Church of England show clearly that the ultimate issue was really over the rights of "personality as the highest thing in earth or heaven"; the Rational, Moral, and Spiritual Consciousness found itself increasingly uncomfortable in the situation which it had created for itself. In the first part of this book the evolution of the human consciousness was discussed and it was seen first how a utilitarian rationalism, concerned only with the self-interest of the natural man, gave place

to a more social and moral law ; then how the impossible straining after merit, resulting only in a sense of sin, was succeeded and fulfilled by the reign of the Spirit of Love, revealed and authenticated in the life of Jesus of Nazareth. This cosmic process is recapitulated in the lives of churches and of individuals. Ultimately, the primary religious authority is seen to be the Spiritual Consciousness. This implies no false division in the human consciousness which is at the same time rational, moral, and spiritual ; the lower is simply carried up into the higher, achieving thereby the unification of all the faculties, just as the religion of law was fulfilled, and not destroyed, by the religion of the spirit.

(1) If then the solution of the conflict of ideals in the English Church is to be settled on a basis of appeal to Christian religious experience as the final religious authority, it is necessary to define more exactly what is meant by this. Considerable impatience is frequently expressed by many who can grasp quite clearly what is meant by an external authority such as the Church or the Bible, but who are not conscious of any unusual stirrings of religious feeling in their breasts such as could entitle that emotion or conviction to be regarded as a religious authority. Nevertheless, Christian experience reveals something which is perfectly comprehensible to every conscious, self-reflecting Christian ; it is something "morally very clear, accurately determined" which every Christian finds "not only in himself but in every one whose consciousness has been awakened to the same life." It consists in the consciousness of sonship to God called forth by the revelation of the nature of God in Jesus

Christ, and in a consequent "inner process of moral transformation through which one passes over 'the great divide' from a life that is self-centred and dominated by impulse and sin to a life that is assured of divine forgiveness, that has conceived a passion for a redeemed inward nature, that is conscious of help from beyond its own resources, and that is dedicated to the task of making moral goodness triumph over the evil of the world." ¹ Prayer remains the characteristic act of the Christian, and the experience of the simplest Christian in prayer is different only in degree from that of the greatest mystic or religious genius. However "formless and vague and fleeting" it may be, "the mystical experience is the bedrock of religious faith. In it the soul, acting as a unity with all its faculties, rises above itself and becomes spirit; it asserts its claim to be a citizen of heaven." ²

(2) Having defined what is meant by Christian religious experience, the question now arises: Whence is it? Where are the foundations of faith to be placed?

The answer to these questions depends upon the view that is taken of the relation of the human to the Divine Nature. If the unfathomable difference between them is one of kind, then obviously faith can only have its guarantee in a revelation made by God and guaranteed by and embodied in an authority external to human nature—the Church or the Bible. This position, however, it is here maintained, is both irrational and incomprehensible,³ and has become

¹ Rufus Jones, *Spiritual Reformers*, pp. xlii f.

² Inge, *Outspoken Essays*, vol. ii, pp. 14 f.

³ See p. 175.

increasingly untenable, as the second part of this book demonstrates. The question at issue must therefore be answered on the assumption that the difference between human nature and the Divine Nature is one of degree and not one of kind, though such a difference still remains "unfathomable," for humanity is utterly dependent upon the Divine Nature which is Self-sufficing. It is frequently assumed that if this view of a community of nature between God and man be granted, there is no alternative but to place the foundations of belief in ratiocination. This however is not so; there is a third solution which springs from the characteristic mystical doctrine of a divine spark, or seed of God, in the soul.¹ "The process of divine knowledge, therefore, consists in calling into activity a faculty which, as Plotinus says, all possess but few use, the gift which the Cambridge Platonists called the seed of the deiform nature in the human soul," "a something too holy ever to consent to evil."² This seed however is not *natural*. "We assert," wrote William Penn, "the light of Christ not to be a Natural Light, otherwise than as all men born into the world have a measure of Christ's Light, and so in a sense it may be called natural to all Men. But this light is something else than the bare understanding which Man hath as a Rational Creature."³ What man does

¹ *Synteresis*, cf. pp. 116 f.

² Inge, *Outspoken Essays*, vol. ii, p. 14. Also cf. Julian of Norwich (*Revelations of Divine Love*, p. 76): "For in every soul that shall be saved, there is a Godly will that never assented to sin, nor ever shall."

³ *Works*, II, p. 780; quoted by Rufus Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 347.

naturally have, in William Penn's view, is a *capacity* ¹ for the Light—the native sympathies of the soul are Christian, as Tertullian said—but the Light itself is from a source wholly heavenly and divine. All those who teach “the dynamic process of salvation presuppose that something of the divine nature, as Light or Seed or Spirit, or the resurrected Christ, is directly operative upon or within the human soul. That is, salvation is for them more than a moral change, it is a birth-and-life-process, initiated and carried through by the *real presence* of the Divine in the human.”

Such then is the order of life; the wind bloweth where it listeth. But God has bestowed upon man understanding and imagination. “Without the slightest doubt thoughts come from the heart, and ideas are born of experience, but this is by an intellectual elaboration whose character is always and necessarily subjective and contingent. It is with religious ideas as with all others; we cannot cite a single one which came down ready-made from heaven, none of which was not formed in a human brain, none whose genesis we cannot trace, and its development through generations.” ² The truths of the spiritual world are permanent, and in this sense there is no evolution at all in religion, any more than there can be evolution in God Himself. “The One remains; the many change and pass.” Yet the spiritual world cannot be known or conceived apart from the human intellect, so that while profound religious experience is the most permanent and least fallible thing in the world, it may

¹ Cf. pp. 56 ff, 90, 100—innate ideas and innate tendencies.

² Sabatier, *op. cit.*, p. 355.

yet be misled both in its imaginative conception and its intellectual formulation. "Remembered revelation always tends to clothe itself in mythical or symbolic form." ¹ "The bread of the spirit has its price equally with that of the body. Whence ensues this consequence; hereditary conceptions which were once individual conceptions are never absolute and may always be indefinitely modified by the travail of mind which created them." ²

Thus, the determining factor in the value of Christian mystical experience is the capacity of mind which accompanies it. It is illusive, sporadic, purely individual, unless it can be translated into the terms of a divine philosophy—a speculative rational system which may perhaps endure for centuries. At the same time, though it is true that the greatness of the mystic varies in proportion to his intellectual powers, these last must not necessarily be confused with dialectical skill or laboured erudition. The gift of reason in its fullest sense is a truly heavenly gift, a *quality* of mind, which, though it may be developed, is yet bestowed in the first place at birth, and may be found alike in the balance and common sense of a labourer as of a trained scholar.

(3) A third question remains. It is not sufficient to know what is religious experience and whence it comes; we must also know under what conditions it is propagated. Once again it will be found that there is an analogy between the natural and the spiritual. The propagation of life, whether physical or spiritual, is not an individual but a social act. "The individual

¹ Inge, *op cit.*, p. 14.

² Sabatier, *op. cit.*, p. 355.

does not produce himself, he is produced in society. An absolute and abstract individualism is false and sterile. Physiology denies it in the physical order, psychology in the moral and religious order. . . . The historic source of the religious life is in the religious society.”¹ In St. Cyprian’s phrase: “The Church is the mother of all of whom God is the Father.” Moreover, this Church must be a visible, universal, historical society, built upon the historic Christ, and springing from a vision of the whole congregation of devout people throughout the world as the highest achievement of the evolutionary process, called into being by the clear revelation of the Christ-principle in the universe through the Incarnation of Jesus Christ.

If the spiritual life of the individual only gains its fullness from the sense of membership in a community, it goes without saying that the moral life also will gain its chief strength from the same source. Only in a reunited Church will the main moral problem of the Christian cease to be the adjustment of his inner ideals to his environment: Christianity will then be able to compel the environment to level up to the ideals of Christ.²

II

THE MARKS OF CATHOLICITY OF A TRUE CHURCH OF CHRIST

The marks of catholicity for a true Church may now be gathered up from the preceding section.

(1) A true Church will have learnt not to equate

¹ Sabatier, *op. cit.*, p. 354.

² Cf. R. Jones, *op. cit.*, p. xxxvi.

religion and theology, and will thus have banished the dogmatic spirit. This does not mean, however, that such a Church will have entirely banished dogma, for dogma is essential—at least to religious thought—and without it religion becomes nebulous and weak. Nevertheless all dogmas are not equally valuable, and it will be found that they may be divided roughly into three classes, which nevertheless to a certain extent always overlap, spiritual dogmas, historical dogmas, and philosophical dogmas of a *secondary* character.¹ The first class consists of the basic truths of the spiritual life which are fundamental to Christianity. As Tertullian wrote: “The soul divines what is divine.” That God Who is Love, and Light, and Truth, is our Father, the express image of Whose character and will is seen in Jesus Christ; that the Spirit of Jesus is the regenerator and comforter of mankind; that the spiritual world is real and its values ultimate—such dogmas constitute the essentials of the Christian religion,² and should be preached as the sole necessities for Christian discipleship.

(2) Other dogmas, creeds, and doctrines are more involved in questions of historical evidence and human logic: they belong to the realm of “notional religion.” Wide diversities of opinion and many different types

¹ Cf. H. D. A. Major, *The Gospel of Freedom*, pp. 68 ff., where these distinctions are worked out more fully.

² Because, notwithstanding their undoubtedly philosophical character, and though they may not be amenable to complete logical demonstration, they yet commend themselves to every man in whom the divine image therein enshrined has been turned to the Light and has not been blurred by lovelessness, sensuousness, and thoughtlessness.

of thought must be tolerated so long as their holders are true to the few fundamentals of the Faith. "It is not that views and opinions are unimportant, but that they are, as George Eliot once said, "a poor cement of human souls," and an inadequate measure of spiritual affinities" ¹: their respective values must be decided in the proper courts of appeal. The cycles of philosophical and theological change come and go, but the Gospel of Jesus Christ remains the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

(3) The inherent impossibility of separating in practice man's intellect from his intuitions has another consequence besides the transience of theological systems. Religious experience itself is largely dependent on the quality of mind of the individual who apprehends it, and upon the beliefs already held by him. It therefore seems very unsafe to assume that every man's religious experience is alike or equally valid. There are some who feel purely rational compulsions to belief in God; there are "God-intoxicated" men who cannot help being religious; there are others whose moral nature has simply been won by the appeal of the Jesus of history. Many are the lights on the way to the city of God—rational, spiritual, moral, emotional, practical. Who shall say that one only is God-given?

(4) Again, spiritual experience mediated by human reason is the very basis of Christian ethics. A true Church of Christ will therefore regard itself as the training ground of intellectual and moral aspiration: it will be in the best and fullest sense an

¹ John Hunter, *The Coming Church*, p. 62.

educational Church : it will be the field where tares shall grow with wheat until the harvest. The impertinent, but unconscious hypocrisy of sectarians who would identify membership with themselves as the true mark of holiness is intolerable : the claim of any Church to possess final disciplinary powers in intellectual matters is presumptuous and will never be seriously accepted in the world of modern research and thought. In England it is certainly both impossible and useless. There are of course, some cases of gross violation of the Christian laws of conduct which demand public rebuke, but in the main the Church should trust men, on the basis that God is love, to work out their own salvation. Patience, love, and confidence have the supremest power to produce great characters. The errors of judgment which a disciplinary Church must make far outweigh those cases where its confidence in a man's conscience will be violated. Such a Church, moreover, goes beyond Christ's own practice, for our Lord only laid down principles which should be interpreted for every situation as it arises. Would that the Church might be content to teach these principles, and then give men freedom to apply them individually !

(5) Lastly, uniformity of Church order and ritual provides no basis for unity. The practices of all churches in all ages should be considered with discrimination, as also the needs of the present. No single form of Baptism, or the lack of it altogether, is necessarily a guarantee of Christian discipleship : neither is participation in, or abstention from the rite of Holy Communion. The will of Jesus in these

matters is not even clearly known. Essential baptism is not of water but of the spirit. "What is it to eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man," cried St. Bernard, "but to live the life which He lived in the flesh?" Although we may believe wholeheartedly "in the sacramental principle and in the need of form, in the sacred ritual of historic Christianity and its high place in the organisation and order of Christian life, yet the thing signified is of much more importance than the symbol, and, as the words of Jesus and the experience of Christian men clearly show, is attainable without it."¹ On the one hand it should be remembered that sacrament easily degenerates into superstition, on the other that there is such a thing as an opposite barren extreme. It is natural for religious experience to clothe itself in symbols, to consecrate material things to sacred purposes, but vital principles should be guarded from confusion with their settings of fable and symbol by the cultivation of rational æsthetics and the spirit of poetry.

Nevertheless the artistic sense must not be prostituted in the interests of untruth. "It is impossible for thoughtful and honest men living at the beginning of the twentieth century to think and speak concerning the things of God as wise and good men thought and spoke in the fifth and sixth, the sixteenth and seventeenth, centuries. And a Church which only belongs to those who can repeat creeds and phrases that have descended from a distant past, cannot be truthfully called a Catholic Christian Church. We

¹ J. Hunter, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

must have simpler forms of prayer and praise. . . . The words one is required to repeat may be venerable and sacred, but age and association do not make them true. The present has its claims as well as the past. It strikes at the root of sincere worship, and threatens to turn the Church into a school of intellectual dishonesty, to be obliged to use words that are ambiguous and obsolete, and to have to think of mental suppressions and evasions in the presence of God. But if prayers and canticles and hymns were what they ought to be in language and sentiment, there is no reason why devout persons holding very different opinions might not join without mental reservations in the worship of the Church.”¹ The true Church will find the solution of the problem of worship in immense variety—the solution of Nature—not in a false ideal of soul-destroying uniformity.

III

DISSENT AND THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

As these five marks of Catholicity have been discussed, acquaintance will have been renewed with the factors which, in the historical section of this book, were seen to lead to Dissent when taken singly and overstressed. The Independents and Romanists separated from the National Church over questions of correct order and ritual, the one appealing to the authority of the Bible, the other to the authority of the

¹ J. Hunter, *op. cit.*, pp. 81 f.

Church. The Baptists, in their reverence for their Moral Consciousness, seceded over questions of correct behaviour and the laxity of existing Church discipline. The Quakers, appreciating the final supreme authority of the Spiritual Consciousness, demanded a completely spiritual Church, forgetting the testimony of history and the value of the sacramental principle in religion. The Unitarians, impatient of doctrinal error, seceded to satisfy the demands of the Rational Consciousness. The Methodists demanded a fixed religious experience, and the absolute authority they yielded to the emotions soon carried them outside the National Church.

Each of these bodies, as they have severed themselves from the Church of England, have left behind them a party which has managed to reconcile the demands of the particular authority in question with allegiance to the original Church. Thus there have remained in the Church of England Presbyterians, Laudians, the Falkland School, and the Cambridge Platonists, the Rational Theologians of the eighteenth century, and the Evangelicals; and by the recrudescences within that Church from time to time of the ideals for which each party stands, it must be assumed that all six may be held consistently with loyalty to the Church of England: the conflict of ideals comes from the undue stressing of one of them by individuals or by parties.

Yet it has needed the protests of Dissent to draw attention to the comprehensive nature of the Church of England. "Nonconformity may well be from time to time a necessity and condition of intellectual

and spiritual veracity, due, not to self-assertion, but to the thoroughness and completeness of self-surrender to the spirit of truth.”¹ Moreover, however nearly the Reformation Settlement of the Church of England embodied the far-seeing vision of the Spiritual Reformers of the sixteenth century, it only managed to leave the door of its constitution open for development. That development has now taken place—from the supremacy of external to internal authority—and a corresponding modification is necessary to-day in the authoritative statement of the position of the Church of England. The historic parties in the English Church have not always understood *why* they have a right to be there, and have often shown in consequence a sectarian spirit, as for example in the disastrous exclusion of the Presbyterians by the High Church party in 1662, and in the assertion of “ Revolution Principles ” which caused the Nonjurors to secede in 1690. In the words of Archbishop Laud, “ he makes the separation who gives the first just cause of it, not he that makes an actual separation upon a just cause preceding.”²

Protestant Dissent, then, is justifiable only so long as the Church of England remains ignorant of, or untrue to, the principles of the Reformation Settlement. These principles are now plain: reformulation is indeed needed, but happily, by the wisdom of providence or the insight of the English Reformers, it may be still in line with the Reformation of the sixteenth century. It may be doubted whether the

¹ Hunter, p. 39.

² Quoted by Hunter.

present Dissenting bodies can do any more good by remaining outside the Church : separation is becoming schism, schism not only on the part of Dissent but also on the part of the Church. It will be well to enquire for a moment what is the condition of the historic Christian religious bodies in England to-day.

The Independents have been largely destroyed by the tide of modern Biblical criticism. The Roman Catholics on the other hand are strong for two reasons : partly because of a slight reactionary movement at the present time due to the war, and partly because of the immense authority of Roman Catholicism in those parts of the Continent which experienced no Reformation. Yet Roman Catholicism as a whole is a demonstrably waning influence : its attempts to preserve a semblance of political power are derided and ignored in its very citadel¹ : within its ranks a species of destructive and sceptical Modernism has come to the birth, the due time for reform having passed and gone. The spirit of the Baptists, largely one of individual independence, has suffered shipwreck in the rising tide of social feeling in England during the last century. The Quakers are quiet in the land, a half-mythical body to the majority of English people, conceived in terms of patience, poetry, and piety. The modern Unitarians, under the impulse of critical influences, have become so much more sympathetic towards orthodoxy that the line of demarcation is often difficult to draw. The Methodists have dissipated their strength by internal dissension and division

¹ Italy, alone of the European powers, declines to have a representative at the Papal Court.

and their numbers greatly decreased during the last century. Further, the advance of Modernism in all the chief Nonconformist communions is likely to lead to further divisions before a movement takes place on a large scale towards reunion. Truly it may be said that religious life is fitful and uncertain apart from the main stream of the Church.

On the other hand, the English Church cannot be considered a paramount power in the land to-day. Although the most comprehensive of churches, it is not comprehensive enough. Those who have not grasped its inner *ethos*—and they are many—believe it to be in complete opposition to the spirit of the twentieth century. It is therefore ceasing to attract to its ministry the most able and enlightened minds. Honest men who subscribe its Articles, repeat its Creeds, pray many of its prayers, and sing many of its hymns, can only do so either because they are confirmed traditionalists, or because they have grasped its forward orientation and believe that the Spirit of Truth soon must conquer. The majority, however, neither share the retrograde outlook nor possess the necessary enlightened optimism; perhaps also, recognising that reforming from within the Church is difficult and dangerous work, they are not sufficiently bold or unselfish to risk the possible impairment to their Moral Consciousness by living under a system which one must accept and even work before one can reform it.

The conflict of ideals in the Church of England is thus seen to hinge on the question of the relation of

religious unity to religious authority.¹ No religious movement in England since the Reformation has had a vogue for more than three generations.² The battle therefore is ultimately one between the spirit of Catholicism and the spirit of Sectarianism, between the demand for a Church whose basis shall be truly Christian and one whose basis shall be narrowly dogmatic. Those who insist on clinging to the smallest number of religious authorities must lapse into, or remain in, Dissent. Those who hold a greater number of religious authorities, and hold them in different orders, will continue to form parties within the English Church, a situation which at least makes for more life but is prone to sharpen conflict. But the true representatives of the English Church will be those who hold fast to all the religious authorities in their due order. The conflict has already been settled in the lives of many of the most loyal sons of the Church. It must now be settled in the life of the Church itself. Our survey of history indicates that a church which pursues exclusively any one type of religious authority may have a unity of membership and a directness of appeal which may not be so apparent in a Church which tries to give judicious valuation to them all, but the first will be sectarian and the second Catholic, although sectarians may call it by various opprobrious names.

¹ Cp. p. 25.

² Pointed out by Canon E. W. Watson in *Lectures at Christ Church on the Eighteenth Century*.

IV

THE NEW REFORMATION IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

It remains to ask exactly in what respects the necessary Reforms will differ from and complete the Reformation Settlement of the sixteenth century.

(1) In our historical and theological review of the Church of England during the last four centuries, the whole gamut of ecclesiastical disputes was gone through—disputes over discipline, ritual, and doctrine. Now, when this cycle of dissension seems to be at last complete, “the moral and spiritual verities of unity, peace, and brotherly love, begin to appear, after all, as the only things really worth contending for.”¹ These are the characteristic virtues of the human spirit in union with the Spirit of Christ. It is this complete emancipation of the human spirit, subject only to the inner compulsions of its own rational, moral, and spiritual faculties, that is the outstanding factor to be taken into account. The Reformation of the sixteenth century was essentially a moral revolt which found expression in rational thought and action and in a quickened perception of spiritual realities, but the superlative importance of these was only recognised dimly in the anxiety to safeguard the new position against the imperial tyranny of Rome. What was then implicit must now be made explicit.

(2) The doctrine of the Church, as the whole

¹ G. Curteis, *Bampton Lectures*, 1871, p. 406.

congregation of devout people dispersed throughout the world, was one of the two fundamental tenets of the English Reformation and requires no modification to-day. The claim of any Church to be an external and final authority was repudiated then, once and for all. However, the reformed churchmanship of the English Church differed from that assumed by continental protestantism. It is true that at one period—in the reign of Edward VI—the English Reformation took on a continental form, but that was alien to its deepest spirit. Its aim was not really the destruction but the recovery of the divine ideal of the Church as reflected in the pages of the New Testament and in the writings of the Primitive Fathers.

(3) The place of the Bible in the Reformation Settlement, although paramount, was not really that since accorded to it by Bibliolatrous Christians. Specific theories of inspiration and infallibility were avoided, and the clergy enjoined diligently to study the Scriptures. Since the doctrine of the Bible as external, over-riding authority has never been demanded by the English formularies, it is open to accept the assistance of modern literary and historical criticism in regarding the Bible as the record of God's progressive self-revelation, and as the supreme manual of religious experience. The evolutionary view of Scripture has now brought to fruition the second fundamental tenet of the Church of England—that its doctrinal basis is as wide as the New Testament itself. Fidelity to the English Church does not require that any, to use Coleridge's phrase, should be "orthodox

liars for God." But if the way of progress was left open, that is not to say that the theology of the English Church at the Reformation may remain the same to-day. The physical and spiritual universe have both been rased and reconstructed since the formulation of the Book of Common Prayer.

(4) The recognition of the authority of the Church and the Bible in the Reformation Settlement secured a continuity for the Anglican Communion with the past that can never quite be achieved by any other existing reformed Church, although it should be remembered that the true principle of continuity is spiritual and not external. In whatever dogmas Christian truths may be enshrined those truths remain the eternal truths of the spiritual world, above the wear and tear of Creeds and transitory doctrinal restatements. Nevertheless, historic and outward continuity is to be valued. The retention of the historic episcopate and order of clergy established a clear link with the Primitive Church, while the preservation of the liturgy and many ancient prayers secured a psychological value for worship which is more and more being realised and appreciated.

Truly, admiration for the English Church, past, present, and future, may not be that mere form of patriotism which many foreigners suppose.¹ It is based upon a measure of a realisation and appreciation of the principles of truth, freedom, and comprehensiveness. "Impregnable against assaults from without, she is the most vulnerable of all churches from within.

¹ *E.g. Pfeiderer, op. cit.*, p. 378.

Anglicanism is at once the most fragile and the most precious of all the historic varieties of the religion of Christ. Its preservation is an arduous task: its destruction would involve irreparable loss.”¹

In the first part of this book the nature of the authorities of the Christian religion was discussed and their evolution traced. In the second part, the principles of the Reformation Settlement of the Church of England were drawn out and the rise and development of the historic church parties followed in their main outlines from the sixteenth century to the present day. At the same time, the decreasing importance of external, and the increasing emphasis upon internal, religious authority was noted. The human spirit has gradually come to a better understanding of itself, and in the nineteenth century it was seen successfully, if laboriously, extricating itself from the ponderous inheritance of the past which had never quite been able to overpower it. Its progress in the Church of England has been checked time after time—by fear of Rome, by fear of French irreligion, and by political conflicts. To-day, however, the human spirit seems determined to come into its own, though it may be salutary to speculate concerning the great reaction that would inevitably have set in had Bolshevism achieved greater success. Even as it is we are experiencing a slight reactionary movement, as a result of the recent war, in the direction of emotional ethics and a less critical religion, but this it may safely

¹ H. H. Henson, *Godly Union and Concord*, p. 38.

be assumed will soon pass unless unforeseen circumstances arise. For better reasons, which have been stated, the attitude of science to religion is now considerably chastened.

The time therefore is ripe for a restatement of Catholic theology and the reconstitution of the Catholic Church. It remains to be seen whether the Church has learnt the lessons of its history. Many times in the past the great opportunity has been missed : if to-day the Church's destinies are shaped and guided by those who have the Spirit of Christ, there is a future ahead which will transcend even the glories of the past.

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INDEX

A

Agnosticism, 145, 191 f.
 Allen, A. V. G., 201
 Ambrose, St., 16 n.
 Amiel, 192 n.
 Andrewes, Bp., 46, 180
 Anglo-Catholicism, 4, 29, 48,
 161, 164 ff., 170 ff., 208 ff.
 "Apostles' Club," 194
 Apostolic Succession, 48
 Aquinas, St. Thomas, 67 n.,
 79, 107
 Arianism, 80 f., 111, 199
 Arminianism, 49, 55 ff., 83, 119 f.
 Arminius, 54 ff.
 Arnold, Matthew, 48, 75, 153,
 171, 189 f.
 — Thomas, 143, 152 n., 153,
 184 ff., 193, 205
 Articles, The XXXIX, 29 ff.,
 37, 55 n., 110 f., 121, 169, 183,
 190, 230
 Augustine, St., 56, 103, 179

B

Bacon, Francis, 67, 70, 72, 79,
 94 ff.,
 Balfour, Ld., 146, 192
 Bancroft, Bp., 46, 179 ¹

Bangorian Controversy, 110
 Baptists, 60 ff., 69, 106, 227, 229
 Barnes, Canon E. W., 204
 Baronius, 49 ¹
 Baur, F. C., 154
 Baxter, Richard, 66 n., 75
 Bennett Case, 161, 182
 Benson, Abp., 208
 Bentham, Jeremy, 190
 Bergson, Henri, 146, 150 n.
 Berkeley, Bp., 79 ³, 93 ² 111 ¹
 Bernard, St., 225
 Berridge, J., 122
 Beveridge, Bp., 84
 Beza, Theodore, 54
 Bickersteth, Bp. E. H., 162
 Biddle, John, 105, 107
 Biddulph, T. T., 160
 Blackburn, Archdeacon, 111
 Blake, Wm., 134 ³
 Blount, C., 90
 Boëhme, Jacob, 6 n., 21 n.
 Bolingbroke, Ld., 91, 95
 Boyd-Carpenter, Bp., 207
 Bradley, F. H., 146, 192
 Brett, Bp., 180
Bridgewater Treatise, 204
 British Association, 147 n.,
 166, 203 f.
 Broad Churchmen, 143, 182,
 185, 195, 200, 202 ff., 206,
 209 f.

R

Brooke, Stopford A., 191
 Browne, Robert, 44
 Browning, Robert, 135, 148 n.,
 171
 Bull, Bp., 84
 Bunyan, John, 64
 Burke, Edmund, 109, 111
 Burnet, Bp., 110
 Bury, Dr. A., 107
 Butler, Bp., 4, 93, 104, 108 n.
 Butler, Samuel, 146, 192
 Buxton, Fowell, 160

C

Cadman, William, 161
 Caird, Edward and John, 146,
 192
 Calamy, E., 110
 Calvin, John, 23, 44, 55 f., 70
 Calvinism, 31 f., 55, 59, 80,
 119 f., 121 f., 142, 163, 185
 Cambridge Platonists, 4, 59,
 64 ff., 75, 97, 103, 137, 141,
 193 f., 218, 227
 Campbell, John McL., 144 n.,
 152
 Carlyle, Thomas, 144 f., 171,
 189
 Cartwright, Thomas, 45
 Casaubon, Isaac, 52 n., 54 f.
 "Central" Churchmen, 208
 Chalmers, Dr., 139 n.
 Champneys, William, 161
 Charles I., 50 n., 52 n.
 Chartists, The, 129
 Chavasse, Bp., 162
 Cheyne, Prof., 157
 Chillingworth, Wm., 53, 58
 Chippendale, T., 135
 Chubb, T., 90
 Church, Catechism, The, 31
 — Eastern, 30, 41, 50, 125

Church, Gallican, 125
 — Roman, 11, 24, 41, 50, 60,
 177, 180, 226, 229
 — Dean, 170
 Churchmen's Union, 209
 Clapham Sect, 160
 Clarke, Samuel, 81 n., 105 n.
 Close, Dean, 160
 Clough, Arthur H., 189
 Cockburn, Wm., 204
 Colenso, Bp., 155, 205
 Coleridge, S. T., 7, 78, 99, 131,
 137 ff., 152, 165, 184, 187 n.,
 193 f., 197
 Collins, A., 91, 94
 Congregationalism, 122
 Constable, J., 134²
Contentio Veritatis, 156
 Convocation, 83, 113
 Copernicus, Nicolas, 77
 Copleston, Edward, 184 f.
 Courayer, Pierre le, 52 n.
 Cranmer, Abp., 31 n., 37 f.,
 41, 48
 Crashaw, Richard, 75
 Cromwell, Oliver, 61
 Cudworth, Ralph, 90
 Cusanus, Nicolas, 77 n.
 Cyprian, St., 47, 221

D

Darwin, Charles, 145, 148, 191
 Daubeney, C., 165
 Davidson, A. B., 157
 Da Vinci, Leonardo, 77
 Deism, 89 ff., 114 f., 118, 151
 Deistical Writers, 80 f., 89 ff.,
 111 f.
 Descartes, René, 72, 78 f.
 Dissenting Academies, 108 n.
 Doddridge, Philip, 113
 Donne, John, 75

Dort, Synod of, 31 n., 55
Driver, Samuel R., 157
Duns Scotus, 67

E

Eckhart, Meister, 20 ²
Eglinton Tournament, 134
Eliot, George, 153 n., 190, 223
Elizabeth, Queen, 33, 44 ff.
Elliot, H. V., 160
Erastianism, 11, 34
Erigena, John Scotus, 68 f.
Erskine, Thomas, 144 n., 152,
184
Essays and Reviews, 154, 155 n.,
191, 205
Evangelicalism, 18, 111, 120 ff.,
125 f., 128 f., 141 f., 154,
159 ff., 166, 173, 177 n.,
185 f., 199, 201, 208 ff., 227
Evangelical Alliance, 162
Exeter Hall, 160, 161 n.

F

Falkland, School of, 53 ff., 69,
71, 185, 193, 205 f., 227
Feathers' Tavern Petition, 111,
183
Fellowes, Robert, 148 n., 203
Ferrar, Nicholas, 54
Firmin, Thomas, 107
Fisher, The Jesuit, 50
FitzRalph, Abp., 21 n.
Fox, George, 63
Francis, St., of Assisi, 16, 20 n.
Fraser, Bp., 207
Fremantle, Dean, 207
Froude, Hurrell, 177
— J. A., 189

G

Gainsborough, T., 134 ²
Galileo, 64, 78, 148
Geddes, Alexander, 151
Geological Society, 151
Gibbon, Edward, 110, 144
Gibson, Bp., 76 n., 79 n., 111,
113 n.
Girton Conference, 158, 180,
210
Gladstone, W. E., 170
Glanvill, Joseph, 70 f.
Gore, Bp., 156 n., 157, 170,
175 ff.
Gorham Case, 155 n., 160 f.
Greek Fathers, 68, 72, 141, 168
179
Green, T. H., 145 f., 181, 192
Grimshaw of Haworth, 122
Grindal, Abp., 45
Grote, George, 190

H

Hales, John, 49 ², 53 ff., 59, 71
Hampden, Renn D., 148 n., 152,
155, 184 f.
Hare, Julius C., 140, 148 n.,
151, 194
Harrison, Frederic, 191
Hartley, Dr. D., 108
Hatch, Edwin, 207
Haweis, H. R., 207
Hawkins, Edward, 184
Hazlitt, Wm., 109 n.
Heber, Reginald, 183
Hegelianism, 145, 147 ³, 186 ²
Herbert, George, 53, 54 n., 75
— Ld., of Cherbury, 89 f.
High Churchmen, 82 ff., 177,
179, 184 n., 185, 228
— Commission, Court of, 53

Hoadly, Bp., 110, 114
 Hobbes, Thomas, 78
 Holland, Henry S., 181 n.
 Hook, Dean, 170, 208
 Hooker, Richard, 4, 31 n., 33,
 36 ff., 41, 45, 48, 53, 137, 143
 Horsley, Bp., 112, 165
 Hort, A. J., 138, 157, 171, 201,
 207
 Howe, John, 110
 Hughes, Thomas, 130, 207
 Humanism, 22 f., 39
 Hume, David, 95, 132 n., 144
 Hunt, Leigh, 109 n.
 Huss, John, 69 n.
 Huxley, T. H., 174, 192

I

Independents, The, 46, 114 n.,
 120 n., 122, 226, 229
 Inge, Dean, 171, 195 n.
 Irenæus, St., 47, 48²

J

Jacobites, The, 85
 James I., 33 n., 45, 49
 James, Wm., 10 n., 146, 150 n.
 Jerusalem, Bishopric, The, 169 f.
 Jesuits, The, 55, 69
 Jesus Coll. (Camb.), 109 n.
 Jewel, Bp., 179
 John of the Cross, St., 20²
 Johnson, John, 180
 Jowett, Benjamin, 153 f., 205
 Julian of Norwich, 116, 218

K

Kant, 7, 65, 99, 137, 138 n.,
 146 n., 147 n.

Keble, John, 30, 166 n., 167,
 170, 174
 Ken, Bp., 83 ff.
 Kepler, 78
 Keswick Convention, The, 162
 Kingsley, Charles, 130, 189,
 194, 201
 Knox, Alexander, 125, 165

L

Lady Huntingdon's Connexion,
 120 n., 122
 Lake, Bp., 83
 Lamarck, 148 f.
 Lamb, Charles, 109 n.
 Lambeth Conferences, 208
 La Mettrie, 79 n., 147
 Laplace, 79
 Latitudinarians, xvii. Cent., 51,
see also Cambridge Platon-
 ists and Falkland School
 — xviii. Cent., 83 f., 87, 109 ff.,
 125, 128, 227
 — xix. Cent., 167, 182 ff., 188 ff.
 Laud, Abp., 4, 46 ff., 55 n.,
 66 n., 86, 132 n., 228
 Laudianism, 46 ff., 53, 57, 60 f.,
 70, 119, 168, 177, 227
 Law, Wm., 112 f., 116 ff., 141,
 196
 Lecky, W. E. H., 24, 73
 Leibnitz, 78, 80
 Leighton, Abp., 24 n.
 Leland, John, 93²
 Leontius of Byzantium, 30
 Lewes, G. H., 190
 Liberal Catholicism, 50, 57,
 84 ff., 179, 181, 208 ff.
 — Evangelicalism, 164, 208 ff.
 Liberalism, *see* Latitudinarians
 Liddon, H. P., 180
 Lightfoot, Bp., 157 n., 171, 207

Lindsey, Theophilus, 106
 Linnæus, 99, 147 n.
 Liturgy, The, 40, 234
 Lloyd, Charles, 165
 Locke, John, 81 n., 87 ff., 98,
 100, 106 f., 137, 146
 Lollards, The, 39
 Longfellow, H. W., 18
 Ludlow, J. M., 130
 Luther, Martin, 23, 38, 68 n.,
 194
Lux Mundi, 156, 180 f., 192
 Lyell, Sir C., 148

M

Macarius, 7
 Macaulay, Lord, 34 n.
 Mansel, Dean, 146, 175, 199
 Mansfield, C. B., 130
 Martindale, Adam, 83 n.
 Marsh, Herbert, 151, 183
 Maurice, F. D., 97, 106 n.,
 129, 140 f., 143, 152, 155,
 169, 171, 175, 181, 193 ff.,
 205 n.
 McNeile, Hugh, 160
 Methodism, 4, 74 n., 75, 111,
 113 ff., 125, 129, 133, 136,
 227, 229 f.
 Mill, J. S., 138, 146, 189, 190 f.
 Milman, Dean, 151
 Milton, John, 64, 80, 100
 Modernism, English, 164, 181,
 208 ff., 230
 — Roman C., 103, 174, 198 n.,
 211, 229
 Momerie, Dr., 207
 Moody (and Sankey) Mission,
 161
 Moorhouse, Bp., 207
 More, Hannah, 121 n.
 More, Henry, 70, 72, 137

Morgan, Thomas, 90
 Moule, Bp., 162
 Mozley, J. B., 170
 Myers, Frederic, 153 n.

N

Neale, E. V., 130
 Nelson, Robert, 83
 Newman, Francis, 189
 Newman, J. H., 29 f., 102 n.,
 104 n., 139, 148 n., 152,
 167 ff., 173 f., 185 f., 197 f.
 Newton, Isaac, 77 n., 78, 81 n.,
 111 n., 183
 Noetics, The, 184 ff., 205
 Nonjurors, The, 82 ff., 168, 177,
 228

O

Ordinal, The, 33, 36, 228
 Oxford Movement, 126, 128,
 134, 165 f., 186, 188, 198
 Owen, Robert, 129 n.

P

Painting, xix. Cent., 134
 Paley, Archdeacon, 111, 183
 Pantheism, 92, 132
 Parker, Abp., 46, 48
 Parker Society, The, 172 n.
 Pascal, Blaise, 10 n., 17 f., 78,
 105, 166
 Pattison, Mark, 3 n., 76 n., 137
 Peacock, Reginald, 37 n.
 Pelagianism, 119
 Penn, Wm., 64, 218 f.
 Pierce, James, 110
 Platonism, 42 n., 72, 168, 195 f.,
 200

Plotinus, 72, 218
 Poetry, xviii. Cent., 95 n. f.
 — xix. Cent., 131 ff.
 Pope, Alexander, 61, 81
 Positivism, 145, 191 f.
 Presbyterianism, 43 ff., 83, 106,
 110, 227
 Priestley, Dr. J., 108
 Privy Council, Judicial Com-
 mittee of, 154, 160 f., 182,
 205 f.
 Puritanism, 4, 41, 43 ff., 60 f.,
 177
 Pusey, E. B., 30, 152, 164,
 169 f., 180, 198

Q

Quakers, 11, 60 ff., 69, 188, 227,
 229
 Quarles, Francis, 75

R

Rashdall, Dean, 171
 Rationalist Press, 192
 Rawlinson, A. E. J., 181
 Reformation Settlement, Ch.
 III., *passim*, 43, 50, 70, 103,
 129, 215, 228, 232 ff.
 Robertson, F. W., 132 n., 171,
 189, 194, 201 f.
 Rose, H. J., 165
 Rousseau, J. J., 114 n., 132,
 186
 Royal Society, The, 66 n.
 Ryder, Bp., 160
 Ryle, Bp., 162

S

Salters' Hall, 105 n., 107
 Sancroft, Abp., 83

Sanday, Prof., 181
 Saravia, 52 n.
 Scott, Thomas, 111 ⁴, 120 n.
 — Sir W., 130, 133 f.
 Secker, Abp., 108 n.
 Seeley, Sir J., 156, 191
 Selden, John, 54
 Shaftesbury, Earl of, 160, 162
 Shelley, P. B., 131, 185
 Sherlock, Dean, 107
 Simeon, Charles, 160
 Smith, John, 72, 137
 — Sydney, 183
 — W. Robertson, 157
 Socialism, Christian, 129 ff.,
 162, 201
 South, Dr. R., 100, 107
 Southey, R., 131
 Spencer, Herbert, 145, 190 f.
 Spinoza, 78
 Stanley, Dean, 143, 153, 155 n.,
 205 ff.
 — Bp., 183, 206 n.
 Stillingfleet, Bp., 54, 83, 88 n.
 Stirling, John, 189
 Stowell, Hugh, 160
 Strauss, D. F., 153, 190
 Suckling, Sir J., 54
 Sumner, Bp., 160
 Sundar Singh, Sadhu, 9 n.
 Suso, Henry, 20 ²

T

Taylor, Jeremy, 53
 Temple, Abp., 192, 193 n.
 Tennyson, Lord, 148 n., 171
 Teresa, St., 20 ²
 Tertullian, 15 n., 47, 219, 222
 Thirlwall, Connop, 137, 143,
 151, 205 n.
 Thoroold, Bp., 162
 Tillotson, Abp., 83, 110

Tindal, M., 90, 92
 Toland, J., 90, 92
 Tractarianism, 133, 165 ff.,
 177, 186, 188
Tracts for the Times, 169
 Traherne, Thomas, 75
 Travers, Walter, 45
 Turner, Bp., 83
 — J. M. W., 134²
 Tyndale, Wm., 4

U

Uniformity, Act of, 44, 83
 Unitarianism, 11, 62, 105 ff.,
 188, 190 f., 227, 229

V

Valla, Laurentius, 49¹
 Van Mildert, 165
 Vaughan the Silurian, 75
 Venn, H., 122
 Voltaire, 95, 112
 Voss, Gerhard J., 52 n.
 — Isaac, 52 n.

W

Wake, Abp., 179 n.
 Wallis, Prof. J., 107
 Walpole, Horace, 76

Walpole, Sir Robert, 76, 82 f.,
 113 n.
 Walton, Isaac, 45, 50 n.
 Warburton, Bp., 93²
 Ward, James, 146, 192
 Waterland, Dr. D., 81 n.
 Watson, Bp., 183
 Watts, Isaac, 113
 Wesley, John, *see* Methodism
 Westcott, Bp., 157, 171, 181,
 201, 207
 Whateley, Abp., 143, 152 n.,
 184 ff.
 Whewell, Wm., 203 f., 205 n.
 Whichcote, Benjamin, 9, 68,
 71 f.
 Whiston, W., 81 n.
 White, Bp., 83
 Whitefield, George, 112 n.,
 114, 120 n.
 Whitgift, Abp., 45 f.
 Wilberforce, Samuel, 170, 204,
 208
 — Wm., 128 n., 160
 Wilson, Daniel, 160
 Woolston, T., 81³, 91, 94
 Wordsworth, Wm., 79², 131 ff.,
 136, 174, 194
 Wotton, Sir H., 54
 Wyclif, John, 21 n., 39, 69 n.

Z

Zurich Letters, 172 n.
 Zwingli, 38

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